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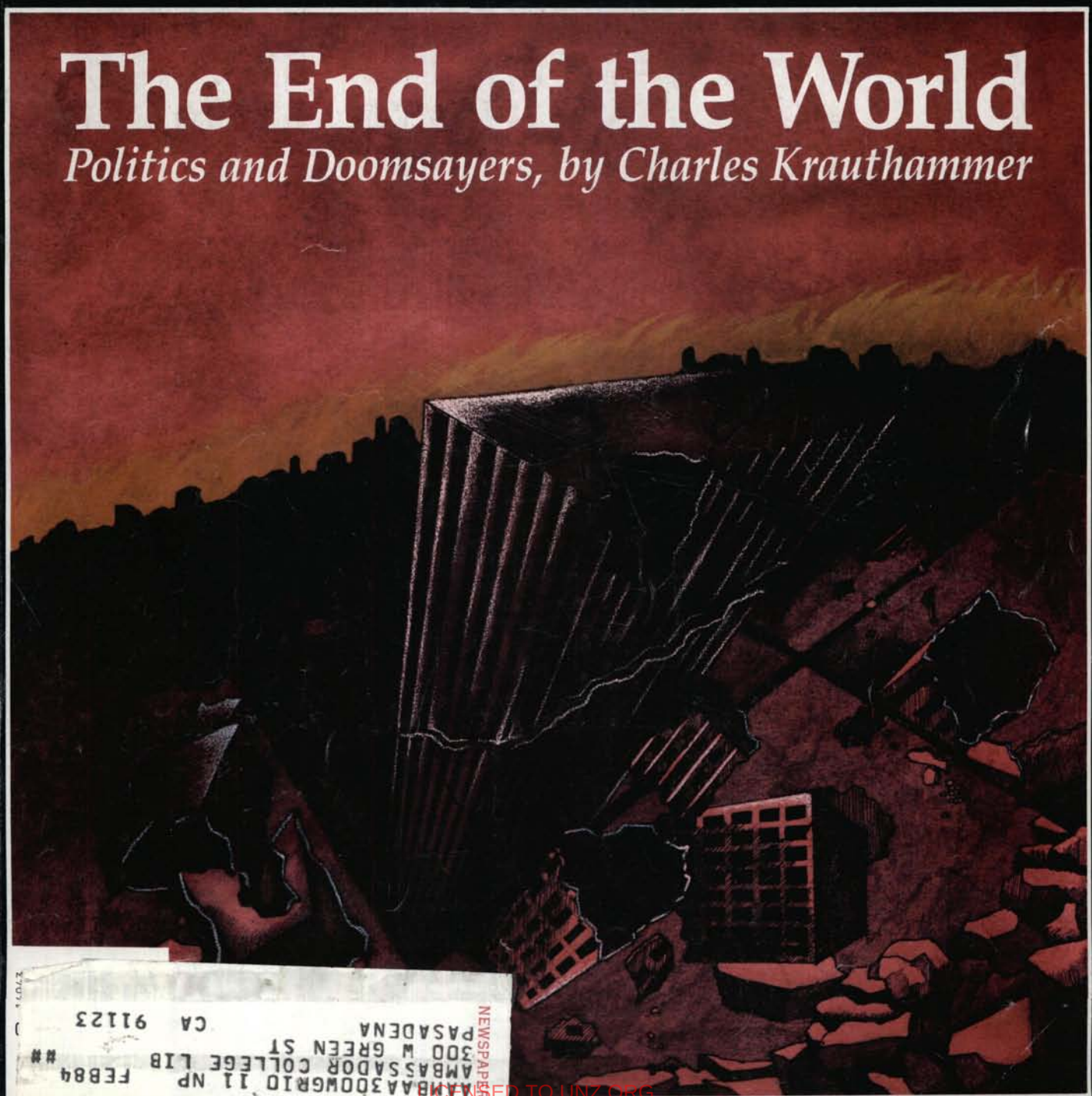
Politics and Doomsayers, by Charles Krauthammer



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Correspondence

East German Communism

To the editors:

In "The View from the Reichstag" (TNR, February 14), Walter Laqueur argues that "the East Germans have been in some ways more efficient than the Russians in building Communism. There is no freedom. . . ." I visited East Germany in 1982, after spending time in the Soviet Union, and I feel that some strong influences for change do exist in East Germany and that the East Germans have not been as efficient in "building Communism" as Mr. Laqueur states.

One should not underestimate the influence of the Western media in East Germany. West German radio and television may be received throughout East Germany, and it is the main source of news (and entertainment) for many of those whom I met. Nor should one underestimate the influence of Western visitors on East Germans. Thousands visit friends and relatives in their homes on the other side of the Wall, where they speak openly about their own lives.

Religion remains a strong influence in East Germany, which suggests that the East Germans have not been entirely efficient in "building Communism." Churches, for the most part, are open, and have not been turned into museums of religion and atheism, as in the Soviet Union. Church-run nursery schools exist in East Germany and are very popular. In the Soviet Union, the authorities never allow religious institutions to educate the young and impressionable.

Finally, Mr. Laqueur cites the fact that many of East Germany's leading writers have left for the West, and suggests that it is a "regrettable matter, no doubt, but a country can manage with second- or third-rate talents." This does a disservice to the less privileged but intelligent people unable to leave. For young people it is virtually impossible even to visit the West, and those seeking to emigrate through marriage to a Westerner find many obstacles in their way. As a result, quite a few "first-rate" talents remain in the East. It is remarkable that they have these qualities despite their education in a system that values the opposite.

SUSAN FINDER
Loudonville, New York

West German Democracy

To the editors:

Josef Joffe's eloquent article, "The Greening of Germany," (TNR, February 14) contains a number of persuasive arguments that may be dangerously incorrect. His fear that a Green electoral victory may threaten the fragile German democratic process obscures the critical role that the Greens might play in moderating a policy of blind adherence to a disastrous nuclear course. When he argues that the Greens' message is "leave us alone," he is really projecting onto the Greens his own message to them: "Leave the status quo alone."

When making historical analogies, one must exercise extreme caution. We must not confuse the longing for peace of the '80s with the longing for peace of the '30s. The Nazis appealed to the organic metaphors of nineteenth-century German Romanticism; the Greens call upon some of the same metaphors in asking us all to consider the long-term physical and social consequences of our present technological course. And both the Nazis and the Greens appeal to German national-

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FROM WASHINGTON

Constitutional Questions

A little group of Constitutional thinkers meets in Washington about every six months and shakes its head over the Founding Fathers. The Fathers left America with the only government in the world that separates executive and legislative powers. (It was all George III's fault). The system worked fine for 150 years or so, but lately we have begun to wonder. Looking around Washington, it's hard to know who's in charge. As often as not there's a stalemate between President and Congress. Political parties that in the past gave government programs cohesion are the weakest they've been in forty years. Should the system be changed? The 200th anniversary of the Constitution is hurtling toward us and the little band is more intent on cerebrating about the Bicentennial than on celebrating it.

What often seems to be lacking here is a point of view, a philosophy. Over in West Germany our friend Helmut Kohl won the election, with Reagan helping him out by taking a more flexible position on reducing strategic arms. The minute the election was over, Reagan was back again on his old hobbyhorse. Speaking to the kind of audience that he loves, the National Association of Evangelicals in Orlando, Florida, he warned against accommodation with the Soviet Union and insisted that Communism is "the focus of evil in the modern world." It does not build global confidence for the head of one government to call its rival the "focus of evil." We shouldn't pay too much attention to this, perhaps. It is just part of Reagan's mind set, like reassuring audiences worried about the economy that there are lots of help-wanted advertisements listed in the newspapers. On the other hand, is it wise for the President to heat up the waters like this?

He is also reinforcing his position on the "social issues." He wants Congress to pass an anti-abortion law, and he seeks tuition tax credit for parents who put children in parochial schools. He also wants a Constitutional amendment overthrowing the Supreme Court ruling against prayers in public schools. "I am determined to bring back that amendment again, and again, and again," he said. So far Congress hasn't paid much attention to him. His initial prayer proposal last May failed even to move out of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Watching Washington at close hand you sometimes get the feeling of a charade. Steven V. Roberts, writing in *The New York Times* on March 6, hinted why: "For a generation, Mr. Reagan has basically given one speech: the paean to free enterprise that he first started refining as a goodwill ambassador for General Electric, and developed into an effective political document during his years as Governor of California. What he delivered on January 25 [in his State of the Union address] amounted to only the second basic speech of his political lifetime . . . the President seemed monumentally uncomfortable and unenthusiastic."

Is there some way of waking up the electorate? In the West German election, some 90 percent of the voters voted. In 1980, the last U.S. Presidential election, only 54 percent voted. Apathy has grown steadily. The percentage of people voting in 1960 was 64 percent; in 1964, 61.7 percent; in 1968, 60.7 percent; in 1972, 55.4 percent; in 1976, 54.4 percent. It's like a flight of stairs.

Those Founding Fathers! Political scientist Charles Hamilton says, "We created a constitutional system deliberately designed to make government action protracted, slow, and controlled. . . . The American political system seems to need an extraordinary jolt in order to pull together its fragmented parts and take forceful action."

Things are getting worse rather than better. Mixed with apathy there is often now a feeling of hopelessness: everybody can see the huge budget deficit overhang, but who is going to meet the crisis? Government is split. Before 1955 the Presidency and Congress were rarely controlled by opposing parties, but now

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
MARCH 28, 1983

HOW TO HELP EL SALVADOR

Damn Vietnam. It is now entering its third decade of interference with America's perception of America's interest. In the 1960s it beckoned us into a blunder, which was to involve ourselves in a revolutionary situation that was of little consequence to the United States. In the 1980s it beckons us again into a blunder, which is to absent ourselves from a revolutionary situation that may be of considerable consequence to the United States. The President has asked for $60 million more in military aid to El Salvador. His request has provoked a debate that seems to be less about Central America than about Indochina. Mr. Reagan assures us that "there is no parallel whatsoever with Vietnam," while an unidentified member of the State Department says that "what we're talking about here . . . is a Vietnamization of the process." And the press and the pundits address themselves portentously to the collective memory. "Why Are We in Vietnam?" asks Anthony Lewis about El Salvador. (He also has the impertinence to write of the present Salvadoran government that it "shot its way in," when the only shots that were fired when this government came in were fired by guerrillas—and at voters.)

Well, we are not in Vietnam, and we are barely in El Salvador. Whether we should be in El Salvador—the how and the why of our relationship to Central America in general—is a great public question. It will not be answered by political necromancy. When the past is an obsession it gives no instruction. The differences between El Salvador and Vietnam are at least as important as the similarities. Among these differences are many thousands of miles. It is not irrational for the United States to want the Soviet Union out of its neighborhood, though it is irrational for the United States to believe that only guns will keep the Soviet Union out. Naturally it is difficult for us to escape the encrustations of the recent past. Vietnam will continue for many years to weigh like a nightmare upon the foreign policy of the living. But we must make our foreign policy in a waking state. The task before the American government is not simply to stay out of Vietnam. It is to provide security for the United States in a manner that will not preclude social justice in El Salvador.

Unfortunately the Reagan Administration thinks of its task a little differently, to the extent that it can make up its mind. The problem posed by the President's request for aid is not the request itself. It is a bit of a bagatelle. The sum is not very great, and will merely raise the level of our military aid to the level it was in fiscal year 1982. (The $110 million figure that Caspar Weinberger laid on the leaders of Congress still falls far short of the military aid we rightly send to countries much, much farther away.) Nor need we be alarmed about the dimensions of American intervention in the Salvadoran war if we increase our large force of 37 military advisers to an even larger force of 55 military advisers. The problem posed by the President's request is more general. It is the absence of any seriously considered strategy for Central America. When the war goes well, we talk about social reform. When the war goes badly, we talk about military assistance. Like so many other areas of American foreign policy, our policy in this area consists mainly in the management of crises and the manipulation of public opinion. But anti-Sovietism is an idea, not a policy. Keeping the Russians out of El Salvador requires planning not for the Russians but for the Salvadorans. At present such planning—a consistent and constructive program for the elimination not only of the effects of the war but also of its causes—is not much in evidence.

What should the American objectives in El Salvador be? There are those who think that this is a great new opportunity for American isolationism, that all we should send to El Salvador are our regrets. There are others who think that there is nothing wrong with El Salvador that a military victory cannot cure. We disagree with both groups. Handing the country over to the

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Leninists along the Lempa would damage El Salvador and the United States, and so would destroying the country in the attempt to liquidate them. It seems obvious that El Salvador has both a military and a political problem, which require both a military and a political solution.

First, the military problem. The war in El Salvador has gone badly in recent weeks. The guerrillas swanked into the town of Berlin, scored a prodigious propaganda victory, and swanked out again. The morale of the Salvadoran army is bad, and so are its tactics. Nobody has won and nobody has lost. The endurance of the Salvadoran insurgency has persuaded many Americans, commentators and Congressmen, that it is time for negotiations. The most commonly espoused goal of such negotiations is "power-sharing." Now, if there is one thing in the world than Leninists do not do, it is share power. How many revolutions will have to ruin how many countries before this is clear? Nor is that all. Those who propose a political solution to the military problem assume that the military problem has a political basis. The revolutionaries of El Salvador, however, differ from other revolutionaries precisely in this respect. They have no political basis. The population of El Salvador—the wretched *campesinos* included—show no support for them. They represent nobody but themselves, and nothing but their own desire to rule. A political solution to this purely military problem would only make a present of El Salvador to totalitarians. (We would pull out, they would come in, and there you would have it—Vietnam!) The reconstruction and reform of the Salvadoran army is a worthy objective for the United States, because by setting ourselves against the revolution we would not be setting ourselves against the population.

Obviously there is a political problem in El Salvador, too, and it will not be solved by military means. The political problem is the result of fascism and poverty, of a right-wing repression and an oligarchic economic reality. The defeat of the guerrillas will remove neither. The Soviet threat is a bad excuse for both.

THE ANSWER to the repression in El Salvador is free elections with the widest possible participation, and the simultaneous withdrawal of any and all American support from the repressors themselves. The Reagan Administration appears to have disabused itself of the idea that Roberto D'Abuisson and his gang can represent our interests. We were edified by the Administration's backing of President Magaña and Defense Minister José Guillermo Garcia during their recent struggle with "Mr." D'Abuisson. Who, then, should the United States support? The center, we liberals say, and say again. But we must understand what a center is and who a center is. A center will not abandon the war against the guerrillas, it will not collectivize the economy, it will not secede from the competition between East and West, it will not set out to remake man. A center is a center, not a left. This is particularly true in El Salvador, where the center is constituted by the Christian Democrats. Since the 1960s, when Christian Democracy took root throughout Latin America, the Salvadoran moderates have developed a position characterized by constitutionalism, economic growth, trade unionism, a strong belief in property, anticolonialism, anti-Castroism—all with a decidedly Catholic coloration.

The center has traditionally been a creation of the middle class, and the Christian Democrats of El Salvador are no exception. They came upon the scene as the political and intellectual corollary of the successful industrialization of some of the Salvadoran economy. (José Napoleón Duarte, who carries the flag, is an engineer.) This is the good news and the bad. The industrialization of the Salvadoran economy did not go very far; the economy remains overwhelmingly agricultural. Moreover, the urban middle class must be distinguished from the rural middle class, the "coffee bourgoisie" whose prosperity was based upon the unfair distribution of the land and the unjust treatment of the agricultural laborers. The Christian Democrats, in other words, are only a part of a small part of Salvadoran society. As in geometry, the center is the point around which things revolve, but it does not take up much space.

ALL IS NOT LOST, however. The institutions of democracy in Central America are uncertain, but the idea of democracy is not. The Salvadoran elections last March are proof. The Christian Democrats, furthermore, are not without possible allies in the attempt to hold a free election. There exists in El Salvador, as elsewhere, a coincidence of interests and ideals between the right wing of the left and the left wing of the right. José Napoleón Duarte has more in common with Guillermo Ungo than with Roberto D'Abuisson. This is where "dialogue"—as it is gingerly known—comes in. While negotiations with the guerrillas for their admission to power must be ruled out, "dialogue" with the democrats among them must not. As U.N. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick observed recently, whoever wishes to participate in the democratic process must be approached. (She might also have observed that the United States will do all it can to protect the safety of those who do.)

And Mrs. Kirkpatrick had another good idea—a Marshall Plan for Central America. "The Marshall Plan," she said, "constituted a response to a regional problem that was simultaneously economic and social and military." That is precisely what American policy in El Salvador should be—a policy on many tracks. A meaningful program for the redistribution of land will do more to keep Castro out than any White Paper we can produce. Recently the Salvadoran assembly voted to extend the present program by ten months—and over the objections of the right. It was a small thing, but it was a good thing. If the United States were to throw its weight behind it, it would be a great thing.

Free elections, "dialogue" with all of Salvador's dem-

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ocrats, military assistance, pressure for the observance of human rights, agricultural reform, economic renewal—and all in the middle of a civil war. Nobody said it was going to be simple. No, that is not correct. Almost everybody said it was going to be simple. The debate on El Salvador provides a perfect example of the deteriorated condition of public discourse in the United States. It consists in a lot of ideological hectoring. The left, and even some of our foremost liberal newspapers, turns out a sentimental portrait of the Salvadoran guerrilla, who "fights better" and is "better motivated" because he is willing to die for his cause. We have heard about the moral glamor of guerrillas before. The fact is that they "fight better" sometimes, but sometimes they do not; and they have won neither the war nor the people. (They left Berlin because they knew they could not hold it.) History reeks of men who were willing to die for false causes, and willing to die for a seizure of power.

The right, including officials of our government, turns out dominoes, and fantasies of a final showdown with Communism. We have heard this before, too. But global threats are made up of regional instabilities. Castro did not create the cracks in Central American society; he found them, and tried to make use of them. Heal these cracks—create the social and economic conditions in which democrats will not despair and make alliances with enemies of democracy—and destroy the death squads as you destroy the guerrilla cells—and the East will have lost another avenue to the West. Nobody is suggesting the use of American troops, because American troops are not necessary for the job. But some projection of American power is. American power may be used for good as well as for evil. It is not only imperialism that the United States can send south of the border. It can also send help.

Arthur Koestler, 1905-1983

Arthur Koestler was a great heretic. He called the most seductive faith of the century false. The Western will to believe in the Soviet style of salvation never quite recovered from *Darkness at Noon*; the book has been helping intellectuals stay honest for generations. In the disputation between the prisoner Rubashov and the commissar Ivanov, the Communist mind was finally unmasked. And in Rubashov's forced confession, the full measure of Stalinism's humiliation of the human was finally exposed: "I plead guilty to having followed sentimental impulses, and in so doing to have been led into contradiction with historical necessity. I have lent my ear to the laments of the sacrificed, and thus become deaf to the arguments which proved the necessity to sacrifice them. I plead guilty to having rated the question of guilt and innocence higher than that of utility and harmfulness. Finally I plead guilty to having placed the idea of man above the idea of mankind. . . . " Koestler recorded these discoveries in 1941, when it took courage. It was a time when intellectual life in the West was organized against the recognition of the obvious. Koestler did not wait around, however, for Hungary, or Czechoslovakia, or Poland, or Afghanistan. For him the Moscow Trials were enough. He spurned the eschatological excuses that were offered for what was before his eyes. There is no such thing, his work argued, as a truth that is premature.

"Those who were caught by the great illusion of our time," he once wrote, "and have lived through its moral and intellectual debauch, either give themselves up to a new addiction of the opposite type, or are condemned to pay with a lifetime hangover." Koestler paid with a hangover. The mind that revolted from systems became miscellaneous. He speculated on creativity and probability; he studied a wide range of parapsychological phenomena; he shed, with the help of some silly medieval scholarship, his Jewishness. (He was once a Zionist —even a secretary to Jabotinsky.) A votary of "voluntary euthanasia," he honored this last unusual notion with an overdose of barbituates. Still, the contribution that this man made to the clarification of our moral and political life was immense. When the young revolutionary decided to blow the whistle on the revolution, and show that Communism was "a white-slave traffic whose victims were young idealists flirting with violence" and that the millennium meant murder, he made himself essential to the education of the epoch.

Notebook

□ STANLEY KAUFFMANN'S film reviews are one of TNR's longest and finest traditions. Twenty-five years ago this month, Mr. Kauffmann wrote his first review in our pages, and the awards have been accumulating ever since. Winner of a George G. Nathan award for dramatic criticism, two Ford Foundation travel fellowships, a Guggenheim and a Rockfeller fellowship, and a New York Emmy, Mr. Kauffmann this month has been named the winner of the 1982 George Polk Award for criticism. The Polk awards are conferred annually in recognition of special achievements in journalism.

□ WE NOTE WITH DISMAY, though scarcely with surprise, that Moscow's campaign to tighten internal ideological controls is continuing unabated. All signs point to the fact that the moving spirit behind the campaign is Yuri Andropov himself. Following his election in May 1982 to the post for ideology and propaganda in the Party's Central Committee, the Soviet Union cut off direct-dial telephone communication between the U.S.S.R. and the United States, most West European countries, and Japan. This was followed by a

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wave of arrests of people whose previous activities had not seemed to give Moscow much pause. Among them were artists, religious believers, Jewish "refusniks," as well as members both of extreme Russian nationalist and social groups. Since Andropov's election as Party Secretary last November, the Soviet press has been engaged in a massive campaign warning the Soviet media to deal more harshly with the "aggressive tactics of the ideology enemy." And in early March two human rights activists were sentenced each to twelve years of depravation of freedom: seven years in a labor camp, and five of "internal exile." Their crime? One of them published verses critical of the Soviet state and the other had organized an underground labor union. The aim is clear: to reduce any contact between Soviet and Western citizens, and to emphasize that whatever "reforms" the new leadership may undertake, they will not be in the direction of greater liberalization. Now that Andropov's critics have been warned, will his Western well-wishers draw the appropriate conclusions?

□ ADELMAN, ADELMAN, ADELMAN. The media has been filled with tales of his troubles. If he is confirmed, however, he will not have much power, as his would-be bosses are the first to admit. Arms control policy will be made (or will not be made) by the President, the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of Defense. Meanwhile the Senate has just confirmed somebody who will have much power, who may indeed leave a permanent mark upon the social behavior of Americans. She is Margaret Heckler, the Secretary-designate of Health and Human Services. Her confirmation hearing was, to put it mildly, no joy. Mrs. Heckler announced that she might support stripping the Supreme Court of its authority in such matters as abortion. She has "very little respect" for the Court's 1973 decision legalizing abortion. "I cannot follow its legal reasoning," she said; no doubt she was telling the truth. Then Mrs. Heckler announced that she has no reservations about the rule requiring federally funded family planners to notify the parents of minors who receive prescribed contraceptives. This, then, is the woman's agenda: the right to life and the squeal rule. Not only fewer abortions, but more pregnancies. In a word, babies. Mrs. Heckler and her policies will be responsible for the mass production of unwanted children. Some friend of the family.

□ FORTY YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "When the sociologists begin to decide how the war changed the people of the United States, one of the stories they will have to tell will be about how several million Yankees discovered the South and left it with a face somewhat altered. In Texas and the deep South, an area which provides the cheapest climate the army can find for its training establishment, there are scarcely more than a dozen towns with a population of 10,000 or more that do not have military installations of some nature. Thus far, the biggest effect of the war economy on the Southern town is still the juke-box variety of prosperity that has come from catering to the soldier's individual needs. The soldier off duty looks principally for a meal, a girl, or something to drink. The commerce that has grown up as a result has brought more Southern and Northern people into contact with one another than anything that has gone before in our history. The resulting clash of standards and mores has brought about changes, on both sides, in long held ideas about the "outlander." The Southern mistrust of the Northerner, as such, has all but disappeared in the space of a few months. The Yankees have been seen and talked to; now they have become a familiar presence." ("Soldiers' Prose: Yankee Army in the South" by Lieutenant Frank Smith, March 29, 1943.)

Why the Queen inspires purple prose.

Dreams Of Royalty

WHEN I MADE my first voyage from the British Isles to America, which was a little after 1492, I deliberately chose to fly Pan Am. I wished to be on the territory of the great Republic as soon as possible. Shortly after the plane took off, its engines seemed to go dead, which was a little unnerving. But I was far more disquieted by the captain's explanation: "We are cutting back the engines for a few minutes because we will be passing over Windsor Castle, where Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth is in residence." I made a firm protest to one of the stewardesses—"I thought that you had declared your independence of George III; now you're fawning like abject peasants to his direct descendant"—but in a few minutes the captain was announcing cricket scores.

A few years later I was flying one afternoon from Washington, D.C., to Denver. I had a speech to write, the plane was crowded, and I found myself sitting between two mothers whose bawling and crawling infants would have made my great aunts shudder. I asked the stewardess if I might change from coach to first class if I paid the difference in the fare. Yes. I thought that I could just give her the cash in return for a simple receipt, but she presented me with an elaborate form to fill out. I did so, and offered the cash. "We can't take cash, only credit cards." "But I don't use credit cards, and these are good dollar bills." She went to consult with the captain—the affair seemed to be assuming the proportions of an international incident—and I expected to be dropped from the plane in midair. At last she returned with a relieved and gallant smile, picked up the form, tore it in half, and said to me: "If you don't say anything

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about this, I will forget about it as well. Please accept your first-class seat as an apology for how the American press has been treating Princess Anne." I assured her that whatever the American press was saying about Princess Anne (it had been taking her to task for her habitual rudeness to any living creature except her horse) it was nothing compared to what the British press said.

THE ATTITUDE of Americans to British royalty never ceases to surprise me. Whenever there is a royal visit or a celebration like the royal wedding, Americans of all kinds begin to sigh to me: "We miss the monarchy in America. We need something like it; in fact, we hanker for it"; and they will often add that that was why the style of the Kennedy Presidency caught so many Americans' imaginations. I don't think they are right. But as the reporting of the Queen's recent visit to California shows, American newspapers and networks generally seem unable to cover royal events with the cool detachment they bring to most news events. For the most part they join the royal hype, often in a mawkish and even cloying way, and then try to assume disdain, to declare their independence, with a few weak cracks on the side.

Donnie Radcliffe in *The Washington Post*, for example, thought it worth recording this conversation between the Queen and the Mayor of San Francisco, Dianne Feinstein: "Feinstein said she greeted the Queen and told her, 'I apologize for the weather.' She said the Queen replied, 'Oh, it doesn't matter. I'm so pleased to be here.' " (Elizabethan dialogue!) She also reported that, during the playing of the national anthems at Santa Barbara, "Elizabeth's face was impassive," which makes one wonder how animated she expects her face to be during perhaps the fifty-thousandth playing of "God Save the Queen" through which she has had to stand. Enid Nemy in *The New York Times* had one good line from San Francisco ("The women of San Francisco do not buy white kid gloves, they have them"), but it was not about the Queen.

As for trying to examine the institution of the monarchy, describe the character of a Queen who has been on the throne for thirty years, or report the kinds of people who make up a royal party, the American reporters do not even bother. Yet I would have thought that British royalty calls for some fairly astringent if not acidulous reporting by American newspapers and television news. There was a fine opportunity for some caustic observation when the wife of a President who is a former film star hosted a dinner for the Queen in a movie studio at which the main guests were all great and decaying film stars. (After all, Americans often say, "Film stars are our royalty.") The evening, by all accounts, was tacky: an old set at Twentieth-Century Fox, with a fountain from *Hello Dolly!* playing here, and a statue of Bacchus (why Bacchus?) from *The Robe* there, and an entertainment at which the Queen seems to have had on her lips the words of her great-grandmother, "We are not amused." But then the whole of the Queen's visit, quite apart from the rain, was rather tacky, a misbegotten idea that the British press is blaming on the Americans, while the American press does not respond, as it should, by asking what the purpose of the visit was in the first place.

It fell between the two stools of a state visit and a personal jaunt. Even Francis X. Clines, one of *The New York Times*'s White House correspondents, trying to assess why President Reagan seemed to detach himself, Mrs. Reagan, and much of his staff from reality for a whole week in order to attend to the Queen, found himself commenting on the respective wardrobes of the Queen and the First Lady. "Nancy Reagan so often seemed to show up in outfits that were far more eye-catching than the Queen's," he wrote. But like the captain of the Pan Am plane, he came down on the side of the Queen: "The Queen's special taste in frocks eventually seemed refreshing against the California norm of overstyled dignity. And on Thursday night the Queen reigned at the state dinner in San Francisco with such a display of diamond shimmer that any contest with Mrs. Reagan imagined by the masses was settled with blinding finality." Even if his tongue eventually got into his cheek—which is not clear—it is still a lot of nonsense to dish up in the foremost newspaper of the Republic. If Presidents are going to entertain royalty, it ought, apart from the State occasions, to be with less gaudy show. When Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt had George VI and Queen Elizabeth to lunch, they served them barbecued hot dogs, despite the objections of many, including, as Joseph Lesh reports, Franklin's mother. Two weeks before the King and Queen arrived, Eleanor wrote in her newspaper column, "Oh dear, oh dear, so many people are worried that 'the dignity of our country will be imperiled' by inviting Royalty to a picnic, particularly to a hot dog picnic."

STILL, AS A BRITON, I am again aware of Americans' craving for something that they believe the royal family provides. But it is not royalty, it is not the monarchy, that Americans miss. A royal occasion reminds me of how American public life is starved of ceremony and even, one may say, of pageantry. American institutions have very little ceremony, and this deprives them of some of the affection that a people should feel for their institutions. The best public shows of a nation should represent its public life; they should not be the parades before a football game or even dinner on a movie set.

President Kennedy tried to attach ceremony only to the Presidency; and President Nixon, in a rather forlorn way, tried to do the same with the "Swiss Guards" at the White House. But it is not only or even primarily of the Presidency that I am thinking. Congress would benefit from some public ceremony; the courts in America could do with a little more augustness; and even the Roman Catholic churches in America have driven out cere-

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mony, so that in many of them one scarcely knows if one is in the house of God or at a drive-in movie. The public life of a nation, and especially of a democracy, needs to be proclaimed and celebrated in convincing ways. The Capitol itself stands magnificently on its hill, a reminder of a time when the leaders of the new nation had a sense of its public life; but how little ceremony there is that makes it an arena of that public life now. Americans might gawk less at the British monarchy if they found some way to celebrate their own public institutions with the kind of uplifting pageantry that can make even a royal wedding more than just a fairy tale to which we attend with a willing suspension of disbelief.

HENRY FAIRLIE

The issue was marks, not missiles.

KOHL'S TRIUMPH

Bonn

THE GERMAN ECONOMY, and not American missiles, determined the winner of the March 6 Bundestag elections. Germans decided that a coalition of conservatives and centrists, rather than one of Social Democrats and ecologists, stands a better chance of ending stagnation and 10.4 percent unemployment. The election of the Christian Democratic coalition headed by the benign-looking, pear-shaped Helmut Kohl means that West Germany is almost certain to stick with the 1979 NATO two-track decision of moving to deploy U.S. nuclear missiles while talking to the Soviets about nuclear reductions. But the vote shouldn't be viewed as a resounding mandate for the deployment of the Pershing II and the Cruise here if the talks in Geneva fail by the end of the year. In fact, one of the major election themes for all four parties was resurgent German nationalism, but it was a neutral-leaning nationalism that may bode ill for the missiles despite Kohl's victory.

Sunday's election was precipitated last fall, when the Free Democrats, Germany's center party, broke with the Social Democrats, their coalition partner since 1969. The Free Democratic Party, with 11 percent of the seats, held the balance of power in the Bundestag, and its defection —on the grounds that the S.P.D. was losing all sense of fiscal responsibility (the deficit had grown to 4 percent of G.N.P.)—produced a new government. Chancellor Kohl then called for elections to reinforce his position and give the new coalition a full four years for its program. But the plan initially seemed to backfire. Many Germans felt betrayed by the F.D.P.'s shift in allegiance, and sad and confused over the loss of the popular S.P.D. chancellor, Helmut Schmidt, who not only stepped down after his party lost power but also said he wouldn't run for re-election, partly because of bad health. One poll showed that only 20 percent of Christian Democratic Union supporters were pleased at Schmidt's departure. Kohl's Christian Democrats, who had gained an enormous lead in the polls (58 percent to the Social Democrats' 28 percent) before the F.D.P. shift, suddenly found themselves with only a slim edge over the S.P.D. and with almost no prospect of gaining help from the F.D.P., whose support in the polls had dropped to less than 3 percent.

BY EARLY JANUARY Kohl was regretting his call for a March election. Most Germans, including Kohl, had begun to see the new government as an interim phenomenon, and expected the Social Democrats to return to power. But the S.P.D. made a fatal mistake. Party leaders, specially Hans-Jochen Vogel, the candidate for Chancellor, became seriously concerned about the Greens, the environmentalist-neutralist party that wants Germany free of American missiles, troops, and political influence. The Greens had received only 1.5 percent of the vote in the 1980 national elections, well short of the 5 percent needed for representation in the Bundestag. But since then they had won seats in six of the eleven state legislatures, and it appeared they might win 5 percent in the March Bundestag vote.

Since the Social Democrats had no chance of winning a majority in the Bundestag on their own, their best hope of returning to power lay in denying both smaller parties, Greens and Free Democrats, their 5 percent. A second, slimmer hope lay in coaxing the Greens, if they did make 5 percent, to back Vogel for Chancellor under reasonable terms. But the Greens demanded that the Social Democrats agree to no U.S. missiles and no nuclear plants as the price for backing Vogel. The S.P.D. couldn't agree, but its strategy became one of moving leftward to try and win over voters who were leaning Green. Going left presented no great difficulty in the absence of Schmidt, who had been fighting a losing battle against the left wing of the Party for years. Vogel, a professorial type with swept-back gray hair, proved a political chameleon.

But instead of picking up potential Green voters, Vogel lost regular S.P.D. voters, who were more interested in solving economic problems than in dealing with the arcana of missile counting. By one postelection estimate, no fewer than 1.8 million voters, mainly blue-collar and office workers, switched from the S.P.D. to the C.D.U. "Never before," said Klaus Liepelt, a highly regarded German political analyst, "has there been such a dramatic shift from one major party to another major party." Not unlike the U.S. Democratic Party of the early '70s, the S.P.D. responded to pressure from the left, ignored its blue-collar constituency, and got trounced.

It was this dramatic shift of working-class voters from the S.P.D. to the C.D.U. that produced the landslide victory for Kohl. Final returns gave the C.D.U. and its Bavarian wing, the Christian Social Union led by Franz

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Josef Strauss, 48.8 percent of the vote—the conservatives' best performance since 1957. The Greens exceeded the 5 percent cutoff by sixth-tenths of a percentage point and will have twenty-seven members in the new Parliament. But the biggest surprise was the F.D.P., which was all but counted out two weeks ago. It ended up with 6.9 percent.

No doubt some of the Free Democrats' support came from moderate Christian Democrat voters who were appalled at the idea of the heavy-handed Strauss becoming foreign minister—and he would have, if the C.D.U. had won a majority by itself, thus obviating the need for a coalition with the F.D.P. The leader of the Free Democrats, Hans Dietrich Genscher, has been a popular foreign minister, and would have been left in the cold if the F.D.P. had fallen short of 5 percent, or if the Christian Democrats and the Christian Social Union had won over 50 percent. Finally, the F.D.P. clearly benefited from being seen as the party of fiscal responsibility. That, after all, is why the Free Democrats broke with the Social Democrats.

But until a week or two before the vote, the economic issue was a hard one to gauge. The question seemed to be: who was to blame for the mess? The Social Democrats, who had been in power for thirteen years and who had built an expensive welfare state, or the Christian Democrats, under whose brief tutelage things had grown worse, with unemployment up from 1.8 million to 2.5 million? Helmut Schmidt, in a widely discussed article in *Die Zeit*, suggested that neither party was guilty, that the economic difficulties were a result of international pressures, not German policies.

THE ELECTORATE may well have agreed with Schmidt. Its decision, according to Elizabeth Noelle-Neumann, who heads the respected Allensbach Institute, was based not so much on who was to blame, but on who could solve the economic problem. And the electorate sided with the Christian Democrats, ironically, because Kohl made two fiscal decisions that seemed politically unpopular. The voters reasoned, "If Kohl is willing to do things that are unpopular in order to set Germany's economic house in order, then he is obviously serious." Confidence in the Christian Democrats rose.

The two decisions were, first, to adjust slightly the formula on which pensions were based, and second, to change Germany's generous system of financial support for high school and college students, turning grants into long-term, low-interest loans. These steps actually helped very little to narrow the deficit, but they apparently convinced many voters, especially blue-collar workers who weren't all that keen on student grants in the first place, that the Christian Democrats were better equipped than the Social Democrats to revive the economy.

An election campaign in Germany is conducted face-to-face, rather than through television advertising. There are only three TV stations, and election law limits the parties to nine commercials during the course of the campaign. Instead, the candidates traveled around to athletic clubs, beer halls, and public squares. Neither Kohl nor Vogel is a rousing speaker, but a few beers make audiences less perceptive.

The Thursday before the election, the two candidates, as well as Strauss and Genscher, got together for a three-hour televised debate. It was more relaxed and free-flowing than American debates, but analysts said it had little impact on the election. What may have had more impact was the release on Tuesday of an Allensbach Institute poll that showed the Christian Democrats with an absolute majority, 50.4 percent, and the Social Democrats with only 37.3 percent. A poll two weeks earlier had the two major parties running only a few percentage points apart. This new poll raised the specter of Strauss's becoming foreign minister and vice chancellor in a Christian Democratic government. It may have encouraged the voters to support the Free Democrats in the final days.

THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION is clearly cheered by Germany's election results, and there is no question that the Christian Democrats' victory—even if it was won primarily on economic issues—gives a morale boost to the NATO alliance. Still, it would be a mistake to assume that German foreign policy will now be totally in synch with America's. The Soviet Union did itself considerable damage by openly siding with the Social Democrats and threatening dire consequences if U.S. missiles are deployed, but this did not necessarily disabuse the Germans about the possibility of détente. The Social Democrats' policy of Ostpolitik produced tangible benefits for the Germans in trade, family contacts, and reduction of tensions; and getting along with the East is still seen across the political spectrum as the key to eventual reunification of the country.

It is yet to be seen whether the Soviets will take the Kohl victory as a signal to cut a deal with the United States in the Geneva missile talks, or to encourage street violence in Germany as a means of stopping deployment. The Greens have announced readiness to stage hunger strikes in Parliament. Other groups will be only too willing to throw rocks and burn cars. And Helmut Kohl, even though he has said he will go ahead with deployment in case the Geneva talks produce no agreement, obviously prefers that the United States and the Soviets reach a pact. He said in his election eve statement that he expected the United States to come up with a new negotiating proposal "that would be a victory for common sense." The Reagan Administration, by hinting at missile flexibility while holding firmly to its basic negotiating stance, certainly outplayed the lead-footed Soviets on the field of German electoral politics. But the game is not over yet.

JAMES K. GLASSMAN

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Varieties of apocalyptic experience.

THE END OF THE WORLD

BY CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

"THIS MAY HURT the cemetery business, but I don't own a plot," declared a smiling Jerry Falwell in a recent Sunday television sermon. The faithful hardly needed to be told why, but for the benefit of those who hadn't heard the good news, he explained that, like others who had been saved, he was going not down but up—into the clouds to meet the returning Christ in what is known to evangelicals as the Rapture. That is to be followed by the torments of the seven years of the Tribulation, and ultimately by the Millennium, a thousand years of bliss. Reverend Falwell was smiling because he was sure that when Jesus said, "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled (Matthew 24:34)," he meant *this* generation. As proof, Falwell went on to list the eleven signs, from the restoration of the Jews in Israel to "the absence of dynamic leadership in the world," that characterize the final premillennial stage. Or as Reverend Tim LaHaye put it, "the countdown to Armageddon has begun."

JERRY FALWELL BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Falwell and LaHaye are among dozens preaching this message, and millions (eight million in the United States alone is a conservative estimate) who believe it. The imminence of the millennium is the common, if not the dominant, theme of the many enthusiasms on display in evangelical broadcasting and publishing. From TV prime-timers like Billy Graham, Rex Humbard, Pat Robertson, Oral Roberts, and Falwell, to the most obscure preacher on local radio, hardly a fundraising plea passes without some reference to the coming of the new age. One interim development has been the emergence of an entire new publishing industry featuring titles like *The Beginning of the End* ("Invasion of Afghanistan. Upheaval in Iran. Annexation of Jerusalem. Shortage of Oil in Russia. The result? An invasion of Israel by Russia . . . an invasion which will trigger the end of the world.") and *Christians Will Go Through the Tribulation: And How to Prepare For It* (the how-to book to end all how-to books, with chapters like "Preparing to survive nuclear war," "Protecting your food supply," "Wind power generation of electricity," and "Preparing for supernatural warfare," with recommendations by Brother McKeever on where to buy supplies).

Though these books do not get reviewed in THE NEW REPUBLIC, their popularity is immense. The number-one nonfiction best seller of the 1970s—in its first 26 months it went through 21 printings—was Hal Lindsey's *The Late Great Planet Earth*, a step-by-step history of the immediate future. The millennial subculture supporting these publications is vast and committed, but submerged. It tends to be noticed only when a believer who happens to be in the public eye inadvertently permits a glimpse of the iceberg, as when James Watt told the House Interior Committee, "I don't know how many future generations we can count on before the Lord returns."

Since Watt's job is to see that Yellowstone Park is around when this generation has indeed passed, his slip of faith evoked some Congressional concern. But it mainly evoked amusement as the slightly eccentric be-

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liefs of an already eccentric man. In religious ages, however, such views were taken, and dealt with, more seriously. The recurrent millennial enthusiasms of the late Middle Ages were almost invariably suppressed brutally. Yet the tradition survived. "America in the early 19th century was drunk on the millennium," writes Ernest Sandeen in *The Roots of Fundamentalism*. It gave rise to many eschatological sects, the most successful of which were the Mormons. The most famous at the time, however, were the Millerites, who survive today as the Adventists, and whose founder, William Miller, predicted the Second Coming in 1843. That was a mistake. As Sandeen observes, "It took a long time for Americans to forget William Miller." Dwight Wilson, another chronicler of these sects, adds, "His error produced a general disillusionment with premillennial teachings, and even made the faithful thereafter a bit shy of date-setting."

The shyness began wearing off after 1917, the year of the Bolshevik Revolution and the Balfour Declaration, which prefigured the rise of Russia (the leader of the "Armies of the North") and Israel. These events spurred a revival of millennial belief that grew more intense with World War II and the subsequent emergence of the Soviet Union as a superpower and Israel as a state. Israel's capture of Jerusalem, the development of global arsenals of extinction, the social dislocations of modern industrial society, and now the looming presence of the magical year 2000 have made the visions more fevered and the visionaries more expectant than ever.

EVANGELICALS are not the only ones to feel the tremors. For the first time, the pollsters report, most Americans are pessimistic about the future. That pessimism, no doubt related to recent American economic and geopolitical defeats, has been harnessed to the traditional messianism of the American civil religion (as Robert Bellah calls it), to produce a sense of apocalyptic apprehension among the nonreligious. *New York Times* columnist, Flora Lewis, was, I think, the first to sense these rumblings. Last year she made at least two allusions to the feeling of fundamental change in the world prefigured by the advent of the year 2000. She went so far as to attribute the "feeling of dangerous weakness" in the West to "a deeper bewilderment as societies move into the third millennium and sense change coming without knowing how to direct it." This, mind you, in 1982, with eighteen years to go. But Lewis merely picked up these subterranean fears; a new class of secular prophets have arisen to give them shape and content. As a result, in the last decade, apocalyptic visions have burst spectacularly into popular consciousness. There are a thousand variations on the theme, though most fall into one of three categories, in descending order of finality and current popularity: nuclear, ecological, and economic.

It hardly bears mentioning that the antinuclear movement is based on an apocalyptic premise. But what is so remarkable about this crusade is the degree to which it insists on the ritual re-enactment and reiteration of that premise. It exhibits a fascination with the precise details of the Final Days that can only be called religious. The most imaginative Christian millennialist can hardly match the passion for extravagant detail of the Ground Zero activist. And it is doubtful that even James Watt is as sure of the inevitability of man's doom as is Jonathan Schell. In fact, the urgency of Schell's tone would lead one to set a date much earlier than Watt's.

NUCLEAR ESCHATOLOGY appeals so powerfully to the imagination that it has temporarily eclipsed its rival, the eco-catastrophe school. There are a hundred variations on that subtheme—overpopulation, resource depletion, ozone stripping, carbon dioxide poisoning, nuclear power, toxic waste, acid rain, pesticides, even supersonic transport—and a book to go with each. It is easy to forget how much currency was accorded these highly perishable, ever-changing themes. As recently as 1970, recalls John Silber in *Bostonia* magazine, *Life* reported that there was a probability that by 1980 urban dwellers would have to wear gas masks to breathe, by the early 1980s a smog inversion would kill thousands of people in some major city, and by 1985 the amount of sunlight reaching the earth would be reduced in half and new diseases that man could not resist would reach plague proportions. The Club of Rome's highly influential report, *The Limits to Growth*, based on a sophisticated computer study, predicted in 1972 that the combined effects of pollution, population growth, resource depletion, and industrialization would drive the "world system" to "the limits of the earth and ultimate collapse." A later version, Willy Brandt's "North-South Report," warned that the immiseration of the third world (the theory that supplants Marx's now defunct prophecy of the immiseration of the industrial working classes) would lead to catastrophic global war. And so on. The bibliography on the subject is so vast as to make one fear, at least, for our forests.

A third though minor and more mundane form of the genre is economic: catastrophe by mismanagement. It is not only the premise of such popular entertainments as *The Crash of '79*, *Rollover*, and *How To Prepare for the Coming Depression*; it is the nightmare behind the paroxysmal panics—over hyperinflation, depression, collapse of the international banking system—that occasionally seize the financial markets. Nonetheless, visions of economic collapse do not seem to have the same hold on the popular imagination as their nuclear and ecological counterparts. A Great Crash would lead only to poverty, riots, and despair, not to extinction, and thus fails to fill our deepest apocalyptic needs.

Though the various doomsday schools tend to produce radically different scenarios, they all demonstrate a strikingly similar, fundamentalist habit of thought. It is characterized chiefly by a deadly literalness. Of course, their texts differ. The evangelicals read the future pri-

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marily in the Books of Daniel and Revelations. Their secular counterparts read it in the charts and graphs of the most recent past human behavior (population doubling times, resource consumption patterns, warhead production rates, etc.), extrapolated directly into the future to the inevitable catastrophic discontinuity where the line falls off the chart. An instructive example can be found in biologist Paul Ehrlich's *The Population Bomb*, first published in 1968. It gives a scenario for the future set precisely in 1983: because of pollution, overpopulation, and pesticides, American harvests have declined precipitously. The wheat crop is less than 25 million metric tons (last year's actual crop was 76.4 million tons), "steak has become a memory," only children are allowed to eat "special low-mercury cod," and food rationing has begun. This is after "almost a billion human beings starved to death in the last decade," and after the "population control laws . . . aimed at blacks and the poor" led to years of urban rioting. The President decides to save the blighted crop with a dangerous chemical that had been banned by a solemn U.N. treaty. This causes a "starvation-wracked Japan," now gone nuclear, to join a Sino-Soviet axis against the United States, which prompts the President to launch a preemptive nuclear attack on them all. ("The idea of preventive war has been popular with our military for decades," writes Ehrlich, or, as Randy Newman sings, "They don't love us anyhow/So let's drop the big one now.")

What is so remarkable about this scenario is not that every element is so wildly wrong (after all, everyone makes mistakes), but that each is so clearly a precise, linear extrapolation into the future of trends occurring at the time the book was written. Apocalypticists, of course, tend to choose only negative factors to project into the future, but the literal transposition of past into future is a common feature of all futurology: it is what makes science fiction movies and world's fair "future" exhibits, for example, so easy to date, regardless of what future they are ostensibly portraying. (Buster Crabbe's Flash Gordon spaceship was a Packard with fins, as were the art deco flying machines of the 1933-1934 Chicago World's Fair.)

The same fundamentalist habit of thought responsible for this scriptural and historical literalism produces a rigid view of human nature, and consequently a constricted view of human possibility. The millennial preacher derives his view of human fixity from the doctrine of original sin. His secular counterpart simply assumes it to keep his model simple: he omits from his calculations man's capacity for adaptation—what economists call elasticity—because that quality is so hard to program into a computer. Take the Club of Rome's complex calculations of resource depletion, based on existing world reserves and rates of world consumption. It concluded, in 1972, that the world would run out of gold in nine years; silver, mercury, and tin within fifteen years; and oil in twenty. Now, let's see. Gold is still with us; no silver, mercury, or tin shortage is in sight; and if we were to repeat today the same calculations for oil, we'd have to conclude that the world has another thirty years' supply left. When the first calculations were made for oil, the world seemed to have only a nine-year supply left. That was in 1936. The problem with these exercises is that neither numerator nor denominator is fixed. Our horizon keeps receding as we approach it because both demand and supply—which in turn derive from taste, knowledge, technology, and substitution—are elastic, a property not found in the world view of computers or their catastrophist masters.

ASIDE FROM a fundamentalist view of history and human nature, secular and religious apocalypticists share a certain moralism, as unmistakable beneath the Hollywood slickness of *The China Syndrome* as in the homiletics of a Falwell sermon. The two camps agree that we are doomed by our sins, though each has a different favorite: the evangelicals are partial to moral depravity (pornography, abortion, divorce); the secularists, to pride (plundering nature, disturbing the ecosphere, seeking strategic superiority).

This reflects in part the class and cultural difference between the two groups. Religious millennialists have always been drawn from socially and economically marginal classes. In the Middle Ages they often formed the fanatical, mystical fringe of revolts of the dispossessed. Today they form the fringe of the newly mobilized moral majoritarians, whose grievances against the modern liberal state run very deep. They are quite distinct from their secular counterparts, who tend to be urban, educated, and middle class. You don't see many "Jesus is coming, ready or not" bumperstickers at a Diablo Canyon lie-in.

These social differences shape their outlook. The evangelicals, displeased as they are with the modern world and with their lot in it, are so positively enthusiastic about the End that they welcome the signs of global deterioration that signal its approach. Pat Robertson counsels no weeping over the great calamities of our time: "We are not to wring our hands and say, 'Isn't that awful?' That isn't awful at all. It is good . . . a token of our salvation." This optimism is hard to find among the nonreligious. For them, the End is simply the end. It is followed not by bliss but by silence. They are not really millennialists at all, but true apocalypticists. And that makes them understandably pessimistic. (An interesting exception is Steven Spielberg, whose films are hopeful, even joyful, a fact that is intimately connected with their quasi-religious quality. *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, for example, is a study of apostolic calling and redemption—coming literally from on high—though Brother McKeever might find Spielberg's rendition somewhat revisionist.)

But the belief in a postapocalyptic future affects more than the mood of the believer. It profoundly influences his actions. The true millennialist tends to be socially

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passive. The appropriate response to the imminent End and subsequent Redemption is to prepare—principally by means of a deeply personal religious commitment (an act of *acceptance*) to ensure individual salvation and a place in the millennium. For the secularist who lacks a deus ex machina, the apocalyptic vision calls not for preparation but prevention. And that means politics, but politics of a peculiar kind: an all-encompassing single-issue politics. Practitioners of traditional single-issue politics don't expect their concerns to be universally shared: blacks fight for civil rights, Jews for Israel, Catholics against abortion, knowing—and accepting the fact—that other groups may have contrary interests and beliefs. Not so in apocalyptic politics. Those who believe that the end of the world is coming and that they hold the key to preventing it, tend to believe that their program is good—indeed, absolutely necessary—for all. They become convinced of their moral obligation to carry out their mission, and impatient with those standing in their way. Germany's Greens promise extraparliamentary "direct action" if democratic means do not keep nuclear weapons off their soil. Paul Ehrlich called (in 1968!) for population control "by compulsion if voluntary methods fail." And why not? History hangs in the balance.

WHAT IS MOST DISTURBING about this kind of politics, however, is not the moral bullying of a militant fringe. The more subtle and pernicious danger is the intellectual style of its leading ideologues, a style marked by a profound intolerance, which not only rigs the terms of the debate (as when they imply that only *they* are in favor of children and other living things), but often abolishes debate altogether. In all sincerity they can't understand opponents who choose death over life. So rather than engage opponents on the facts, they diagnose them. The antinuclear psychiatrist and Hiroshima expert, Robert J. Lifton, has just written a book in which he explains that those who hold views contrary to his suffer from "nuclearism," a kind of addiction to nuclear weapons. This is a medical update: Lifton's previous diagnosis had been "psychic numbing," a pathological denial of impending doom so crippling that one loses the capacity for rational action and thought, and spends one's time rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic.

The problem with the intellectual style of those who are convinced that we are all on the Titanic is that the whole purpose of democratic politics is to rearrange, and authoritatively allocate, deck chairs and other social goods. Its method is to accommodate the push and pull of competing interests and weigh competing values. As Isaiah Berlin argues in "John Stuart Mill and the Ends of Life," the genius—and tolerance—of liberalism derives from its refusal to declare any single value supreme. The nature of apocalyptic politics is to do just the opposite: to declare that one value, and the program to achieve it, is uniquely important. It then follows that all others are insignificant, if not dangerous distractions. Jonathan Schell is so insistent on that point that I am inclined to agree with Otto Friedrich's wry observation that "the end of the world is, in a way, a pun." Or, to state the problem another way: apocalyptic politics demand a declaration of emergency. But democracy never coexists well with emergency, a lesson we have always learned during wartime. We also learned it from McCarthyites and other right-wing hysterics, who found the normal democratic processes insufficient to meet their self-declared emergency.

But, it is said, how can we worry about intellectual styles, democratic processes, and deck chairs when the world is about to end? For God's sake, we're on the Titanic! Well, are we? Like all unanswerable questions, this one is best left for last. No one knows, or can pretend to know, and those who are seized with the certainty that they do know deserve to be treated with some skepticism. They take insufficient account of the elasticity of human nature and the adaptability of human societies. They conveniently ignore what Professor Joseph Nye calls the "crystal ball effect," the fact that leaders today, unlike Kaiser Wilhelm and Asquith in 1914, know precisely what the world will look like after the next world war, a fact that accounts for the remarkable caution with which the superpowers treat each other. The doomsayers also have a credibility problem. Their historical record is not particularly good. In 1962 Bertrand Russell predicted nuclear war within months. C. P. Snow made a similar prediction, adding that his view was not a matter of opinion or speculation, but scientific certainty. Hardly anyone recalls now the pronouncements of the Club of Rome and its imitators, made with equal scientific certainty, that by now industrial civilization would be wracked by scarcity, overpopulation, and uncontrollable pollution.

Nevertheless, the fact that new Millerites rise and fall every few years doesn't prove that today's Millerites may not in fact be right. Does that mean that we are in an emergency? Yes, but no more than other civilizations, since all are susceptible to destruction. That possibility exists, always, everywhere. Numberless societies have been destroyed by natural disaster, war, and internal collapse. There is a certain hubris in believing that ours is the first to face the prospect. But more than hubris, danger too. Not from the true millennialists, who are passively, and joyously, making their devotions and stocking up on biscuits and distilled water. But from the fretful apocalypticists, whose declarations of emergency—of an ever-changing succession of emergencies—make political claims on all of us. Sidney Hook once said that those who make survival the supreme value are declaring that there is nothing they will not betray. The same holds for those who use the threat of apocalypse as an instrument of political blackmail. That is reason enough to resist the sirens calling us to the moral equivalent of war, and go on with our daily business.

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Thinking about the unthinkable.

THE FREE TRADE FALLACY

BY BOB KUTTNER

IN THE FIRMAMENT of American ideological convictions, no star burns brighter than the bipartisan devotion to free trade. The President's 1983 Economic Report, to no one's surprise, sternly admonished would-be protectionists. An editorial in *The New York Times*, midway through an otherwise sensibly Keynesian argument, paused to add ritually, "Protectionism might mean a few jobs for American auto workers, but it would depress the living standards of hundreds of millions of consumers and workers, here and abroad."

The Rising Tide of Protectionism has become an irresistible topic for a light news day. Before me is a thick sheaf of nearly interchangeable clips warning of impending trade war. With rare unanimity, the press has excoriated the United Auto Workers for its local content legislation. *The Wall Street Journal*'s editorial ("Loco Content") and the *Times*'s ("The Made-in-America Trap") were, if anything, a shade more charitable than Cockburn and Ridgeway in *The Village Voice* ("Jobs and Racism"). And when former Vice President Mondale began telling labor audiences that America should hold Japan to a single standard in trade, it signaled a chorus of shame-on-Fritz stories.

The standard trade war story goes like this: recession has prompted a spate of jingoistic and self-defeating demands to fence out superior foreign goods. These demands typically emanate from overpaid workers, loser industries, and their political toadies. Protectionism will breed stagnation, retaliation, and worldwide depression. Remember Smoot-Hawley!

Perhaps it is just the unnerving experience of seeing *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Village Voice* on the same side, but one is moved to further inquiry. Recall for a moment the classic theory of comparative advantage. As the English economist David Ricardo explained it in 1817, if you are more efficient at making wine and I am better at weaving cloth, then it would be silly for each of us to produce both goods. Far better to do what each does best, and to trade the excess. Obviously then, barriers to trade defeat potential efficiency gains. Add some algebra, and that is how trade theory continues to be taught today.

To bring Ricardo's homely illustration up to date, the economically sound way to deal with the Japanese menace is simply to buy their entire cornucopia—the cheaper the better. If they are superior at making autos, TVs, tape recorders, cameras, steel, machine tools, baseballs, semiconductors, computers, and other peculiarly Oriental products, it is irrational to shelter our own benighted industries. Far more sensible to buy their goods, let the bracing tonic of competition shake America from its torpor, and wait for the market to reveal our niche in the international division of labor.

But this formulation fails to describe the global economy as it actually works. The classical theory of free trade was based on what economists call "factor endowments"—a nation's natural advantages in climate, minerals, arable land, or plentiful labor. The theory doesn't fit a world of learning curves, economies of scale, and floating exchange rates. And it certainly doesn't deal with the fact that much "comparative advantage" today is created not by markets but by government action. If Boeing got a head start on the 707 from multibillion-dollar military contracts, is that a sin against free trade? Well, sort of. If the European Airbus responds with subsidized loans, is that worse? If only Western Electric (a U.S. supplier) can produce for Bell, is that protection? If Japan uses public capital, research subsidies, and market-sharing cartels to launch a highly competitive semiconductor industry, is *that* protection? Maybe so, maybe not.

Just fifty years ago, Keynes, having dissented from the nineteenth-century theory of free markets, began wondering about free trade as well. In a 1933 essay in the *Yale Review* called "National Self-Sufficiency," he noted that "most modern processes of mass production can be performed in most countries and climates with almost equal efficiency." He wondered whether the putative efficiencies of trade necessarily justified the loss of national autonomy. Today nearly half of world trade is conducted between units of multinational corporations. As Keynes predicted, most basic products (such as steel, plastics, microprocessors, textiles, and machine tools) can be manufactured almost anywhere, but by labor forces with vastly differing prevailing wages.

With dozens of countries trying to emulate Japan, the trend is toward worldwide excess capacity, shortened useful life of capital equipment, and downward pressure on wages. For in a world where technology is highly mobile and interchangeable, there is a real risk that comparative advantage comes to be defined as whose work force will work for the lowest wage.

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In such a world, it is possible for industries to grow nominally more productive while the national economy grows poorer. How can that be? The factor left out of the simple Ricardo equation is idle capacity. If America's autos (or steel tubes, or machine tools) are manufactured more productively than a decade ago but less productively than in Japan (or Korea, or Brazil), and if we practice what we preach about open trade, then an immense share of U.S. purchasing power will go to provide jobs overseas. A growing segment of our productive resources will lie idle. American manufacturers, detecting soft markets and falling profits, will decline to invest. Steelmakers will buy oil companies. Consumer access to superior foreign products will not necessarily compensate for the decline in real income and the idle resources. Nor is there any guarantee that the new industrial countries will use their burgeoning income from American sales to buy American capital equipment (or computers, or even coal), for they are all striving to develop their own advanced, diversified economies.

AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND of tidal change in the global economy, the conventional reverence for "free trade" is just not helpful. As an economic paradigm, it denies us a realistic appraisal of second bests. As a political principle, it leads liberals into a disastrous logic in which the main obstacle to a strong American economy is decent living standards for the American work force. Worst of all, a simple-minded devotion to textbook free trade in a world of mercantilism assures that the form of protection we inevitably get will be purely defensive, and will not lead to constructive change in the protected industry.

The seductive fallacy that pervades the hand-wringing about protectionism is the premise that free trade is the norm and that successful foreign exporters must be playing by the rules. Even so canny a critic of political economy as Michael Kinsley wrote in these pages that "Very few American workers have lost their jobs because of unfair foreign trade practices, and it is demagogic for Mondale and company to suggest otherwise." But what is an unfair trade practice? The Common Market just filed a complaint alleging that the entire Japanese industrial system is one great unfair trade practice!

To the extent that the rules of liberal trade are codified, they repose in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (stay awake, this will be brief). The GATT is one of those multilateral institutions created in the American image just after World War II, a splendid historical moment when we could commend free trade to our allies the way the biggest kid on the block calls for a fair fight.

The basic GATT treaty, ratified in 1947, requires that all member nations get the same tariff treatment (the "most favored nation" doctrine), and that tariffs, in theory at least, are the only permissible form of barrier. Governments are supposed to treat foreign goods exactly the same as domestic ones: no subsidies, tax preferences, cheap loans to home industries; no quotas, preferential procurement, or inspection gimmicks to exclude foreign ones. Nor can producers sell below cost (dumping) in foreign markets.

Since 1947 there have been seven "rounds" of multilateral negotiations under GATT auspices, which have sharply reduced prevailing tariffs. In the last series of negotiations, the so-called Tokyo round, the United States pressed unsuccessfully for reductions in "nontariff barriers." Not surprisingly, this campaign failed, for what we consider nontariff barriers are the essence of other nations' economic development strategies.

Moreover, the GATT lacks an enforcement mechanism. If an alleged treaty violation is confirmed, the complaining country has the right to impose countervailing duties. But this action itself invites further retaliation and is usually decided on political, not legal, grounds. For example, when the European Airbus consortium cracked the U.S. market with a billion-dollar sale to Eastern Airlines, the deal included loans far below market rates, an unequivocal violation of the GATT regime. But the United States, torn between alienating Boeing—or alienating Eastern and half of Europe—did nothing.

Nor does the United States quite live up to its own saintly standards in trade. Probably the most famous recent example is the 1971 Domestic International Sales Corporation Law, which gives tax advantages to American exporters. The Common Market filed a GATT complaint against the patent tax favoritism; the GATT upheld it; and nothing else happened. The law is still on the books. We also periodically pressure trading partners to adopt voluntary import quotas; we export billions of dollars worth of subsidized farm products. And for years the Europeans have complained that Pentagon spending on research and development is a hidden subsidy to the United States aerospace industry.

IN CLASSICAL free trade theory, the only permissible candidate for temporary protection is the "infant industry. But Japan and its imitators, not unreasonably, treat every emerging technology as an infant industry. Japan uses a highly sheltered domestic market as a laboratory, and as a shield behind which to launch one export winner after another. Seemingly, Japan should be paying a heavy price for its protectionism as its industry stagnates. Poor Japan! This is not the place for a detailed recapitulation of Japan, Inc., but keep in mind some essentials:

The Japanese government, in close collaboration with industry, targets sectors for development. It doesn't try to pick winners blindfolded; it creates them. It offers special equity loans, which need be repaid only if the venture turns a profit. It lends public capital through the Japan Development Bank, which signals private bankers to let funds flow. Where our government offers tax deductions to all businesses as an entitlement, Japan taxes ordinary business profits at stiff rates and saves its

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tax subsidies for targeted ventures. The government sometimes buys back outdated capital equipment to create markets for newer capital.

The famed Ministry of International Trade and Industry has pursued this essential strategy for better than twenty years, keeping foreign borrowers out of cheap Japanese capital markets, letting in foreign investors only on very restricted terms, moving Japan up the product ladder from cheap labor intensive goods in the 1950s to autos and steel in the 1960s, consumer electronics in the early 1970s, and computers, semiconductors, optical fibers, and just about everything else by 1980. The Japanese government also waives antimonopoly laws for development cartels, and organizes recession cartels when overcapacity is a problem. And far from defying the discipline of the market, MITI encourages fierce domestic competition before winnowing the field down to a few export champions.

Free-trade purists and neoprotectionists alike can readily agree that America should bargain harder for reciprocal access to Japanese markets, but that would solve only a small part of the Japan problem. The other elements of Japan's brilliantly successful mercantilism—the development loans, the incubation of supply with state-seeded demand, the cartels—constitute a fundamentally different strategy of economic development, which happens to be attractive to much of the world. It is not likely to be banished from international commerce by American appeals to the GATT or the sainted memory of David Ricardo.

THE JAPANESE not only sin against the rules of market economics. They convert sin into productive virtue. By our own highest standards, they must be doing something right. The evident success of the Japanese model and the worldwide rush to emulate it create both a diplomatic crisis for American trade negotiators and a deeper ideological crisis for the free trade regime. As Berkeley professors John Zysman and Steven Cohen observed in a careful study for the Congressional Joint Economic Committee last December, America, as the main defender of the GATT philosophy, now faces an acute policy dilemma: "how to sustain the open trade system and promote the competitive position of American industry" at the same time.

Unfortunately, the dilemma is compounded by our ideological blinders. Americans believe so fervently in free markets, especially in trade, that we shun interventionist measures until an industry is in deep trouble. Then we build it half a bridge.

There is no better example of the lethal combination of protectionism plus market-capitalism-as-usual than the steel industry. Steel has enjoyed some import limitation since the late 1950s, initially through informal quotas. The industry is oligopolistic; it was very slow to modernize. By the mid-1970s, world demand for steel was leveling off just as aggressive new producers such as Japan, Korea, and Brazil were flooding world markets with cheap, state-of-the-art steel.

As the Carter Administration took office, the American steel industry was pursuing antidumping suits against foreign producers—an avenue that creates problems for American diplomacy. The new Administration had a better idea, more consistent with open markets and neighborly economic relations. It devised a "trigger price mechanism," a kind of floor price for foreign steel entering American markets. This was supposed to limit import penetration. The steelmakers withdrew their suits. Imports continued to increase.

So the Carter Administration moved with characteristic caution toward a minimalist industrial policy. Officials invented a kind of near-beer called the Steel Tripartite. Together, industry, labor, and government would devise a strategy for a competitive American steel industry. The eventual steel policy accepted the industry's own agenda: more protection, a softening of pollution control requirements, wage restraint, new tax incentives, and a gentlemen's agreement to phase out excess capacity. What the policy did not include was either an enforceable commitment or adequate capital to modernize the industry. By market standards, massive retooling was not a rational course, because the return on steel investment was well below prevailing yields on other investments. Moreover, government officials had neither the ideological mandate nor adequate information to tell the steel industry how to invest. "We would sit around and talk about rods versus plate versus specialty steel, and none of us in government had any knowledge of how the steel industry actually operates," confesses C. Fred Bergsten, who served as Treasury's top trade official under Carter. "There has never been a government study of what size and shape steel industry the country needs. If we're going to go down this road, we should do it right, rather than simply preserving the status quo."

THAT VIEW, of course, was heresy to most of the Carter Administration (not even Bergsten is quite comfortable with it). It is even clearer heresy to the Reagan Administration. The steel story has an intriguing epilogue. The Reagan Administration put a stop to the government's mild flirtation with industrial policy. U.S. Steel repaid the Tripartite by purchasing Marathon Oil. The industry continued to hemorrhage. And in 1982, under pressure from the now comatose steel industry, the Administration negotiated new, tougher import quotas. There was, of course, no talk of quid pro quos. Reagan believes in free markets.

Well, we have all read that steel is just a dying smokestack industry. In the new information age, we won't really miss it anyway. All right, take semiconductors, the basic building block of advanced electronic technology. We invented them. Did you know that Japan, Inc., successfully leapfrogged over the last generation of semiconductor technology, and now has 56 percent of the U.S. market in advanced computer mem-

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ories? The Japanese accomplished this feat through the usual methods. They kept out direct U.S. investment, while insisting that American manufacturers wishing to sell in the Japanese market share their technology with Japan. Texas Instruments was permitted to set up a joint venture with Sony, but had to limit its market share to 10 percent and license its patents to Sony, Hitachi, Toshiba, and Mitsubishi. In the early 1960s, MITI organized a consortium of Japanese firms into the Japan Electronic Computer Company, which got loans from the Japan Development Bank. This, in turn, provided a market for the infant semiconductor industry.

OR CONSIDER the important machine tool industry. The future belongs to computerized machine tools, which can be reprogrammed to perform a wide variety of industrial tasks—another natural target of MITI. In 1976 Japanese suppliers held just 3.7 percent of the U.S. computer-controlled machine tool market. Last year the Japanese share was 60 percent. The Reagan Administration is nervously weighing an unusual petition from a major U.S. maker of computerized machine tools, Houdaille Industries; the case captures all the elements of the free-trade trap.

In early 1982, Houdaille's president, Phillip O'Reilly, stumbled on a little noticed provision of U.S. law. Under the 1971 tax act, the President of the United States may disqualify foreign products from the 10 percent investment tax credit if he finds that they originate in a country that violates trade norms. O'Reilly set out to document that the Japanese machine tool industry systematically engaged in practices that would be illegal in the United States, hiring the prestigious Washington law firm, Covington & Burling. So far the investigation has cost Houdaille a million dollars, and has produced one of the most intimate pictures of Japanese industrial strategy yet available in English.

MITI began by ordering marginal producers out of the Japanese machine tool industry. The remaining big producers then got exemptions from Japanese antitrust laws. The venture got the usual R&D help and the preferential loans. The Japanese also devised an ingenious subsidy to help Japanese manufacturers become customers for the new computerized machine tools. Several hundred million dollars in revenues from the popular spectator sports of motorcycle and bicycle racing are funneled to municipal research centers for the application of advanced technology.

Covington lawyer Richard Copaken videotaped Japanese officials proudly describing the process. A Japanese watch manufacturer, for example, asks the Tokyo technology center to evaluate whether he can use numerically controlled machining centers. The center's engineers design software, test it, and use it to produce prototype watch parts. The manufacturer then purchases a state-of-the-art numerically controlled machining center, with the computer program ready to go. Japanese, of course. A smiling official explains, "These manufacturers cannot afford to do this work themselves and still make a profit. So the center does this work for them."

The Reagan Administration wishes that Houdaille would go away. Denying the investment tax credit to purchasers of Japanese machine tools would invite a stampede of similar petitions from other domestic industries. Instead, the Administration hopes to get the Japanese to "voluntarily" cut machine tool exports. Using tax policy as a far more targeted instrument of industrial policy runs counter to the ideological embrace of free markets. Houdaille was not an issue during Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone's January visit. It was mainly about beef, citrus products, and the Administration's campaign to make Japan rearm. Presumably if the Japanese let us sell them more oranges, filet mignons, and mortars, we needn't worry about semiconductors or machine tools. The Japanese, incidentally, in their defense against the Houdaille petition, employ a wonderfully nervy argument. Restriction of the investment tax credit to American capital goods, they contend, would violate the GATT.

THE ARGUMENT that we should let "the market" ease us out of old-fashioned heavy industry in which newly industrialized countries have a comparative advantage quickly melts away once you realize that precisely the same nonmarket pressures are squeezing us out of the highest-tech industries as well. And the argument that blames the problem on overpaid American labor collapses when one understands that semiskilled labor overseas in several Asian nations is producing advanced products for the U.S. market at less than a dollar an hour. Who really thinks that we should lower American wages to that level in order to compete?

In theory, other nations' willingness to exploit their work forces in order to provide Americans with good, cheap products offers a deal we shouldn't refuse. But the fallacy in that logic is to measure the costs and benefits of a trade transaction only in terms of that transaction itself. Classical free-trade theory assumes full employment. When foreign, state-led competition drives us out of industry after industry, the costs to the economy as a whole can easily outweigh the benefits. As Wolfgang Hager, a consultant to the Common Market, has written, "The cheap [imported] shirt is paid for several times: once at the counter, then again in unemployment benefits. Secondary losses involve input industries . . . machinery, fibers, chemicals for dyeing and finishing products."

As it happens, Hager's metaphor, the textile industry, is a fairly successful example of managed trade, which combines a dose of protection with a dose of modernization. Essentially, textiles have been removed from the free-trade regime by an international market-sharing agreement. In the late 1950s, the American textile industry began suffering insurmountable competition from cheap imports. The United States first imposed quotas

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on imports of cotton fibers, then on synthetics, and eventually on most textiles and apparel as well. A so-called Multi-Fiber Arrangement eventually was negotiated with other nations, which shelters the textile industries of Europe and the United States from wholesale import penetration. Under M.F.A., import growth in textiles was limited to an average of 6 percent per year.

The consequences of this, in theory, should have been stagnation. But the result has been exactly the opposite. The degree of protection, and a climate of cooperation with the two major labor unions, encouraged the American textile industry to invest heavily in modernization. During the 1960s and 1970s, the average annual productivity growth in textiles has been about twice the U.S. industrial average, second only to electronics. According to a study done for the Common Market, productivity in the most efficient American weaving operations is 130,000 stitches per worker per hour—twice as high as France and three times as high as Britain. Textiles, surprisingly enough, have remained an export winner for the United States, with net exports regularly exceeding imports. (In 1982, a depressed year that saw renewed competition from China, Hong Kong, Korea, and Taiwan, exports just about equaled imports).

But surely the American consumer pays the bill when the domestic market is sheltered from open foreign competition. Wrong again. Textile prices have risen at only about half the average rate of the producer price index, both before and after the introduction of the Multi-Fiber Arrangement.

NOW, IT IS POSSIBLE to perform some algebraic manipulations and show how much lower textile prices would have been without any protection. One such computation places the cost of each protected textile job at several hundred thousand dollars. But these static calculations are essentially useless as practical policy guides, for they leave out the value over time of maintaining a textile industry in the United States. The benefits include not only jobs, but contributions to G.N.P., to the balance of payments, and the fact that investing in this generation's technology is the ticket of admission to the next.

Why didn't the textile industry stagnate? Why didn't protectionism lead to higher prices? Largely because the textile industry is quite competitive domestically. The top five manufacturers have less than 20 percent of the market. The industry still operates under a 1968 Federal Trade Commission consent order prohibiting any company with sales of more than $100 million from acquiring one with sales exceeding $10 million. If an industry competes vigorously domestically, it can innovate and keep prices low, despite being sheltered from ultra-low-wage foreign competition—or rather, thanks to the shelter. In fact, students of the nature of modern managed capitalism should hardly be surprised that market stability and new investment go hand in hand.

The textile case also suggests that the sunrise industry/sunset industry distinction is so much nonsense. Most of America's major industries can be winners *or* losers, depending on whether they get sufficient capital investment. And it turns out that many U.S. industries such as textiles and shoes, which conventionally seem destined for lower-wage countries, can survive and modernize given a reasonable degree of, well, protection.

WHAT, THEN, is to be done? First, we should acknowledge the realities of international trade. Our competitors, increasingly, are not free marketeers in our own mold. It is absurd to let foreign mercantilist enterprise overrun U.S. industry in the name of free trade. The alternative is not jingoist protectionism. It is managed trade, on the model of the Multi-Fiber Arrangement. If domestic industries are assured some limits to import growth, then it becomes rational for them to keep retooling and modernizing.

It is not necessary to protect every industry, nor do we want an American MITI. But surely it is reasonable to fashion plans for particular key sectors like steel, autos, machine tools, and semiconductors. The idea is not to close U.S. markets, but to limit the rate of import growth in key industries. In exchange, the domestic industry must invest heavily in modernization. And as part of the bargain, workers deserve a degree of job security and job retraining opportunities.

Far from being just another euphemism for beggar-thy-neighbor, a more stable trade system generally can be in the interest of producing countries. Universal excess capacity does no country much of a favor. When rapid penetration of the U.S. color TV market by Korean suppliers became intolerable, we slammed shut an open door. Overnight, Korean color TV production shrank to 20 percent of capacity. Predictable, if more gradual, growth in sales would have been preferable for us and for the Koreans.

Second, we should understand the interrelationship of managed trade, industrial policies, and economic recovery. Without a degree of industrial planning, limiting imports leads indeed to stagnation. Without restored world economic growth, managed trade becomes a nasty battle over shares of a shrinking pie, instead of allocation of a growing one. And without some limitation on imports, the Keynesian pump leaks. One reason big deficits fail to ignite recoveries is that so much of the growth in demand goes to purchase imported goods.

Third, we should train more economists to study industries in the particular. Most economists dwell in the best of all possible worlds, where markets equilibrate, firms optimize, and idle resources re-employ themselves. "Microeconomics" is seldom the study of actual industries; it is most often a branch of arcane mathematics. The issue of *whether* governments can sometimes improve on markets is not a fit subject for empirical inquiry, for the paradigm begins with the assumption that they cannot. The highly practical question of *when* a

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little protection is justified is ruled out *ex ante*, since neoclassical economics assumes that less protection is always better than more.

Because applied industrial economics is not a mainstream concern of the economics profession, the people who study it tend to come from the fields of management, industrial and labor relations, planning, and law. They are not invited to professional gatherings of economists, who thus continue to avoid the most pressing practical questions. One economist whom I otherwise admire told me he found it "seedy" that high-wage autoworkers would ask consumers to subsidize their pay. Surely it is seedier for an $800-a-week tenured economist to lecture a $400-a-week autoworker on job security; if the Japanese have a genuine comparative advantage in anything, it is in applied economics.

Fourth, we should stop viewing high wages as a liability. After World War II, Western Europe and North America evolved a social contract unique in the history of industrial capitalism. Unionism was encouraged, workers got a fair share in the fruits of production, and a measure of job security. The transformation of a crude industrial production machine into something approximating social citizenship is an immense achievement, not to be sacrificed lightly on the altar of "free trade." It took one depression to show that wage cuts are no route to recovery. Will it take another to show they are a poor formula for competitiveness? Well-paid workers, after all, are consumers.

WHICH BRINGS ME full circle to the United Auto Workers' much maligned domestic content legislation. The U.A.W. bill would require a large fraction of the value of automobiles sold in the United States to be assembled here. Over thirty countries have similar restrictions. Western Europe drastically limits sales of non-European cars, and it encourages non-European producers such as Ford, GM, and Toyota to build for the European market in European plants. Most likely, content legislation would invite just the sort of retaliation we want: foreign automakers would produce here.

Unlike import quotas, the content approach keeps Detroit under real competitive pressure, because it places no limits on the number of Toyotas and VWs Americans may buy. The claim that U.S.-built Toyotas would sell at inflated prices is vastly exaggerated. Much of Japan's price advantage reflects more efficient production; it takes fewer man hours to build a Japanese car. If the yen rises 10 to 15 percent against the dollar, as many experts say it should, a U.S.-built Toyota would sell for about the same price as one built in Japan.

There is no guarantee that wage reduction by itself would sell more cars. A grand bargain for the U.S. auto industry would surely include wage restraint—coupled with some protection, with a massive investment in retooling and an industry commitment of job security. That is a bargain the U.A.W. would gladly accept. But nobody is offering it. The automakers have shown time and again that they will take the wage restraint and continue to shift production overseas anyway. The Administration is opposed to both the concept of domestic content and the philosophy of using government to broker quid pro quos. In this climate, the U.A.W. is not rushing forward to disarm unilaterally as a grand sacrifice to American competitiveness.

Unfortunately, too, most of the 226 members of Congress who co-sponsored the U.A.W.'s bill did so with guilty consciences. There is still no permissible vocabulary in American liberalism to discuss managed alternatives to free markets. Walter Mondale, reeling from one superficial question after another on a recent "Meet the Press," finally sighed, "I have for many years resisted local content legislation, but I've come to the point where I don't know what other defense there is. . . ."

DOMESTIC CONTENT, to be sure, is only half a policy. The problem is not that content legislation is the wrong half, but that the other half is missing. And it will be missing until more liberals and professional economists become comfortable with economic planning. Until then, the pressures of trade will continue to back America into third-best versions of industrial policy. Strangely enough, even the Reagan Administration has put in place some piecemeal ingredients of industrial planning. A new Bureau of Industrial Economics created in the Commerce Department late in the Carter Administration has been expanded. Commerce now publishes import penetration data. For the first time since World War II, the government is minimally competent to analyze America's own industries. Commerce is also helping to finance a multimillion-dollar applied-research venture designed by labor and management to modernize production technology in the men's apparel industry. And the Justice Department's antitrust division has blessed a research cooperative in the semiconductor industry. Recently, at MITI's suggestion, U.S. Trade Representative William Brock announced a joint U.S.-Japanese hi-tech working group.

But it would pain the Reagan people terribly to have anybody brand this an industrial policy, just as it pains the Administration to admit that it engages in protectionism. A spokesman for the U.S. Trade Representative patiently explained to me that the forthcoming extension of the Japanese quota on autos is a "unilateral initiative by the Japanese" that we have nothing to do with, for to impose a quota would violate the GATT.

Nor is the government getting much better at coordinating its nonprotection policy with its nonindustrial policy. Last year, in response to semiconductor industry complaints of Japanese dumping, Commerce Undersecretary Lionel Olmer advised MITI to alert Japanese manufacturers to the risk of pricing exports below their costs. Not long afterward, the U.S. Justice Department notified Japanese semiconductor manufacturers that they were under investigation for fixing prices too high. The Japanese thought that was hilarious.

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Crazy about Comedy

The screenplay of *The King of Comedy* is by Paul D. Zimmerman, a former film critic of *Newsweek*. Martin Scorsese, the director, has usually worked with scripts by himself collaborating with Mardik Martin or Paul Schrader, and most of those scripts have been conceived as naturalistic torrents, meant to sweep us with their turbulence. Zimmerman's script is a concoction, a matchstick construction naturalistically colored but close in concept to the gimmicky Hollywood and French comedies of the 1930s. This may explain why the picture is virtually bare of Scorsese style, such touches, heavy or helpful, as the opening manhole shot of *Taxi Driver* or the opening prize-ring sequence of *Raging Bull*. I saw nothing in *The King of Comedy* that couldn't have been done by any competent director. Cinematically, it's flavorless.

The King of Comedy
(Twentieth-Century Fox)

Scorsese's lack of liftoff here may be due to the nature of the psychopathy with which he is dealing. Yes, his central figure is once again a psychopath, but, unlike his other films, the pretense here is that the man is only eccentrically obsessed. Neither Zimmerman nor Scorsese really faced the facts that they themselves put forth in the film, never came near realizing in full the character they were dealing with. In fact they never create a character, only an immense running gag of gray (not black) humor. No wonder the resultant film makes us feel that, for the first time, Scorsese seems untouched by what he is doing.

Robert De Niro, too, who is once again Scorsese's leading actor, seems somewhat hamstrung by the pasteboard ninny he consented to play. De Niro doesn't need violence in order to be excellent: remember his performance in *The Last Tycoon* (under another director). But basically he, like Scorsese, seems to have been partly anesthetized by infatuation with the *idea* of the script and hasn't perceived that the protagonist, as written, is only an arrangement of actions to make that idea possible.

That protagonist is named Rupert Pupkin: and the name itself ought to have been a warning to all concerned that they were dealing with a self-conscious "little man" attitude. Rupert, apparently in his thirties, is a messenger who idolizes a talk-show host named Jerry Langford. Rupert wants nothing but to be a stand-up comic and talk-show host like Jerry. He, along with others, hangs around the studio stage door. He lives (to judge by the one exterior shot) across the river in New Jersey with his mother, and he has furnished the cellar of their house like a studio, with tape equipment, with three chairs—a life-size cutout of Liza Minnelli in one, of Jerry on the other side, and a place for himself in the middle. As he fantasizes aloud, his mother calls down to him from above to lower the taped sound effects.

By the time that place and character have been established, the film, intended to be socially surgical, has itself been established: as myopic, false, and forced. At his age Rupert is still a messenger. How intelligent can he be? Much less shrewd and smooth, surely, than he is here. He seems to have all the time he needs at his disposal every day. Then how does he earn a living? Especially, how does he afford the expensive equipment in his cellar and his spiffy, if not tasteful, clothes? On the salary of a messenger who apparently works very little?

Rupert is so pasted together of incredibilities that he isn't even convincing as the demented person he would be if he were credible. And he couldn't be lovably pathetic, as intended, even if believable. His persistence *isn't* persistence: it's a mixture of inability to recognize reality and ability to fantasticate. He doesn't perceive how he's behaving in Langford's offices when he tries to see the comic or what is being done to get rid of him. He doesn't know that his taking a girl out to Langford's suburban home, after he has persuaded her that they have been invited for a weekend, is psychotic. Well, psychopaths don't always know of their affliction, even in lucid moments. But this ignorance seems as much De Niro's as Rupert's: the two ignorances combine to make the character a puppet. (His last name is clearly meant to suggest that word. Leave the filmmakers out of it: if Rupert Pupkin himself were minimally sane, he would know that his name is ludicrous and would either alter it or exploit it.)

His girl friend, played by the gorgeous and engaging Diahnne Abbott, is black. Would Rupert have a black girl friend? Not likely, in his environment. Would she, a bartender drawn as worldly wise, have picked up so congenially with a fellow she hasn't seen since high school and didn't much like then? Would a smart girl have believed that he had been invited to Langford's country home, had been asked to bring a guest? Would Langford, whose city quarters are carefully guarded, have no security at all in the suburbs? If Rupert had made a nuisance in the office and then intruded in the suburbs, wouldn't Langford without hesitation have called the police? And even if he *had* talked Rupert into leaving, wouldn't he then have told the police as a precaution, against the sort of action that indeed follows?

Involved in that action is another

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Betrayal. A lesser Harold Pinter play transformed into wry cinematic high comedy. Exquisitely written, directed, acted.

Parsifal. Highly idiosyncratic, teemingly imaginative. H. J. Syberberg has made Wagner's (complete) work into a musical film poem.

Local Hero. A Highland fling, nicely flung. Bill Forsyth's romance about a U.S. oil executive in a Scottish village is, in the main, pleasantly plausible.

Tootsie. Dustin Hoffman darts and glistens in this always-amusing concoction about an actor who plays an actress—and is never again the same.

SK

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Langford groupie, a rich New York Jewish girl, a role cast by Scorsese to show, I assume, that he is no slave to film cliché but which shows instead a desperation to give his flimsy script a touch of old-time Scorsese verism. This girl assists Rupert in the film's climax, a sequence by now so publicized that I'm not spilling any beans. The two kidnap Langford and use a death threat to get Rupert a chance to tape a comedy sequence for the show. Rupert makes a hit, goes to prison, is much celebrated, and comes out after two years to comedy success. (What happens to the girl who was his accomplice? No word about her.) The finish was presumably intended to be wry, à la Preston Sturges; instead it's mechanically benevolent, like diluted Frank Capra.

ONLY ONE MOMENT in the whole picture struck me as truthfully scathing, the tone that apparently was the hope for all of it. After Rupert threatens his way into taping his comedy bit in front of a live audience, he comes out and tells some weary jokes. *The audience laughs.* I believed that. You can hear almost every night on TV that audience response is conditioned by more than the Applause sign. Has there ever been a comic, however dismal, who came out before a TV audience and never got *any* laughs? Not in my experience. The audience is as hype-happy as Rupert, is excited by being there, and seems to feel some deep obligation to do their part. And since they are hype-happy, the only way they can be in the show is to laugh. Responses vary in warmth, of course: the good comics do better than the lesser ones; but an audience never completely lets the show down. That scene of Rupert's seemed to me valid, so it was the only scene that was satirical.

Faced only with an armature hung with tags, aware of this fact or not, De Niro does his extraordinary best to transform the mechanics into a man. He gets Rupert's requisite basic hearing block: the man never really hears the denials, rejections, put offs that come his way. De Niro tells us this with half-smile, with glinting eyes, with assumed svelte superiority. He also gets the unrhythmical quality of Rupert's movement and gesture, epitomized in that one TV appearance. De Niro knows that Rupert has studied Langford and other comics, that he thinks he has learned how to do the stuff. But all Rupert has acquired is some of the mannerisms—the Bob Hope run-on, for instance. He doesn't have central ease, his delivery is a collection of remembered inflections, he hasn't a clue about what to do with his arms. Because that scene is the best in the script, De Niro, one of our best film actors, is able to blend Rupert's imitation of professionals and his residual amateurishness into a spot of horror. But the rest of the script, with its faked characterization and flabby dialogue, its unrealized insanity, gives De Niro troubles.

Jerry Lewis plays Jerry Langford, and I'd guess he had a good deal to do with his own dialogue. Now past zaniness, Lewis presents a hardened old pro, quiet, a bit tired, very sure. Would any "straight" actor have been as good as Lewis in this role? I doubt it. Lewis's life has written the part, and, with Scorsese's help, he has managed something much harder than it sounds: to be himself.

A chance was missed in this film, a chance that Susan Seidelman grasped in her small-scale *Smithereens*: to show the harrowings of hype in little lives, lives that might have been much happier if left unteased. The most quoted remark on this subject is Andy Warhol's line that, in the future, everyone in the world will be famous for fifteen minutes. What's terrible in that remark is not that it's possible, not that media of the future may even more ruthlessly exploit and cast aside, but that, in our culture, publicity has replaced sex and even success as the dirty little secret.

ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON THEATER

Beyond New York

There was a poignant piece published in *The New York Times Book Review* some weeks ago by the California novelist, Herbert Gold, concerning the New York shadow that hovers over San Francisco literary life. Despite all the energy and originality informing the presses, poetry centers, and universities of this lively Western city, Gold says, Bay Area writers are still feeling neglected, and slightly paranoid, in relation to the reviewers and publishers of the East Coast, which causes a mood of powerlessness and isolation.

This mood seems to be shared by people in the regional theater. Recently the Denver Center Theater sent a letter to a number of drama critics, inviting us to some of the productions of the resident company there. "One problem we have," it read, "is that Denver is so far from other metropolitan centers that the company runs the risk of 'being born to blush unseen and waste its sweetness on the desert air.' " Apparently, the Guthrie Theater had been experiencing some of the same pangs of country churchyard isolation because, that very same week, a large group of Eastern critics, most of whom had not covered the work of this rejuvenated theater since Ciulei's first season in 1980, were being offered an expense-free trip to Minneapolis to review a production of *Peer Gynt* (the opening unluckily fell on the weekend of the Great Blizzard of 1983 so with all East Coast airports closed, the Guthrie's sweetness was momentarily wasted not on desert air but under twenty inches of snow).

These junkets suggest some of the difficulties now affecting the decentralized American stage, which had not been foreseen when the movement first began (in the mid-1960s) with funds from the Ford Foundation and the blessings of the National Endowment for the Arts. Then, professional resident companies were being formed in every relatively populous city of the United States, drawing on the best available talent and material, in an enthusiastic burst of populist community fervor. It is true that most of the founders of this movement were people who had first made their reputations in New York: Gordon Davidson at the Mark Taper in Los Angeles, William Ball at the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco, Adrian Hall at the Trinity Square Repertory in Providence, and Zelda Fichandler at the Arena Stage in Washington, et al., but in the earlier phases New York would have to supply the major share of talent until indigenous local performers had been identified, recruited, and trained.

This dependence on New York artists, however, soon caused some problems

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because, regardless of the satisfactions of the work, many city-based actors were unwilling to leave their homes for long periods in strange cities at low salaries without some guarantee of national attention. For a time, that attention was available, particularly when the movement was still a novelty, but at the very moment the theater was growing broader in scope and ambition, theater reviewing was growing more constricted. Despite periodic efforts to start one, the United States, unlike Great Britain, has never been able to sustain a national cultural newspaper. Our one plausible candidate, *The New York Times*, sends reporters anywhere in the world to cover the news, but the policy of its theater page is to ignore any event more than an hour's drive from 43rd Street, unless it is a new play with a chance of moving to Broadway. Up till now, *Time* magazine has been even more indifferent to theater beyond New York, though *Newsweek*, thanks to the redoubtable Jack Kroll, makes a serious effort at comprehensive cultural reviewing within the limitations of space and editorial tolerance. The smaller magazines, like *The Nation* and THE NEW REPUBLIC, simply do not have the funds to send their critics across the country on a regular basis.

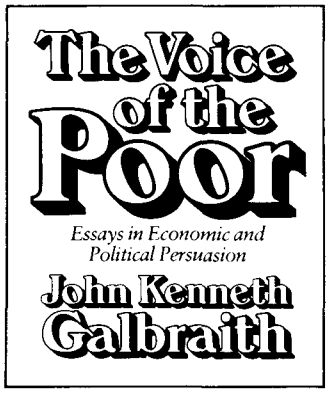
Still, national attention, while always welcome, was not meant to be crucial; it should have been possible to sustain this movement locally once the theater and its actors were accepted by the community. What some theaters were discovering, however, was that not only actors but foundations, corporations, private contributors, and even the local press, were looking to New York for confirmation of their value. This was true especially when the work was controversial. The conventional American Conservative Theater can command the loyalty of San Francisco without the benefit of national coverage, but the Guthrie, always generously supported by Minneapolis corporations and large subscription audiences when it was more traditional, badly needs critical recognition for its recent experimental work in order to stave off an alarming drop in attendance. Since a theater that is really doing its job is more likely to goad the community than to soothe it, it is often forced by circumstance to seek outside approval just in order to survive.

Clearly, the decentralization movement has not yet succeeded in escaping from the cultural authority of New York. A theater company may have been working in a community for over a decade, doing genuinely important work, but it is not really authorized or respected until it has been reviewed by the national media or moved a production to Broadway (the new pride is immediately reflected by the box office, contributed support, and renewed attention from the local media). This is discouraging, but it shouldn't be surprising to those engaged in building a healthy decentralized theater. Unlike museums and symphonies, which have long been a source of civic pride and support, the stage has for so long been associated with a few side streets in downtown Manhattan that most out-of-towners still tend to regard anything other than Broadway tours and tryouts as the amateur effort of little theaters and community groups. As a result, the professional resident theater movement has been obliged to assume not only an artistic but also a social and educational mission: to emphasize its differences from the commercial system, to encourage a regular theatergoing habit, to develop audiences who support the institution as a whole rather than flock to individual "hits."

Since this inevitably requires an independent spectator who values his own opinions, the dependence of the theaters on national critics is a bit of a contradiction, one that helps reinforce the sway of the Eastern establishment and delivers responsibility for American theater back into the hands of the New York-based market system. It is a paradox that decentralization will not succeed until American communities begin to respect their own indigenous culture; yet, this respect is still a quality monitored by New York for its own cultural purposes. It is for these reasons that resident theaters have been laboring to bring the Eastern Mohammeds to the regional mountains. Their only alternative is to move the mountain East, where Mohammed can do his climbing without first booking a flight on American Airlines. Either way involves some danger to the ideals of decentralization, if not to its very existence, but if the movement fails, it will share its failure with the values of American society.

For it does not reflect well on a nation of this size and diversity to center any aspect of its culture in one city or region. To assume that New York has a monopoly on sophistication and refinement in

John Kenneth Galbraith



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any artistic area is to doom the rest of the country to permanent provincialism. New York, of course, like Paris or London, will always be a principal theatrical city by virtue of its population, wealth, and resources, but so long as it continues to cast its shadow over the rest of the land, it reduces the regional theater to a tributary feeding a main stream. An important movement, initially underwritten by substantial foundation support and attracting a number of gifted people, is now faltering for lack of sufficient local courage and pride. It will not revive until Americans beyond New York recognize that, as far as the theater is concerned, they live not in desert air but in a healthy cultural climate.

THE ARCHITECT OF VICTORY

The Papers of George Catlett Marshall: Volume 1 The Soldierly Spirit, December 1880-June 1939 edited by Larry I. Bland and Sharon Ritenour

(The Johns Hopkins University Press, 742 pp., $30)

Marshall: Hero for Our Times by Leonard Mosley

(Hearst Books, 570 pp., $18.50)

In November 1943, in a conversation with General Dwight D. Eisenhower about the choice of an overall commander for the Normandy operation, President Franklin D. Roosevelt said, "Ike, you and I know who was Chief of Staff during the last years of the Civil War, but practically no one else does, although the names of the field generals—Grant, of course, and Lee, and Jackson, Sherman, Sheridan and the others—every schoolboy knows them. I hate to think that fifty years from now practically nobody will know who George Marshall was. That is one of the reasons I want George to have the big command."

Marshall did not, of course, get the Normandy command. He was always reticent about things he wanted very much, and it was easy to persuade him that he was needed more in Washington than in London. And that fact has perhaps, at least in part, caused his name to fade from the public memory. A friend of mine at a prestigious eastern university was recently interviewing applicants for Marshall Scholarships and made a point of asking each of them who Marshall was. Among the group of thirty blue-chip seniors the question caused embarrassment. One or two remembered that there had been a Marshall Plan, and one thought Marshall might have been Secretary of State. But no one knew that he had been a soldier, let alone this country's greatest Chief of Staff.

There are, sadly, good reasons for this amnesia. The central role that historical instruction once had in the nation's schools and colleges has long since been usurped, on the school level, by "social studies" and in the universities by any number of trendy subjects like "Sleep and Dreams" and "Human Sexuality." What history is now taught generally avoids attention to the forces that have had the greatest influence in determining the fate of nations, namely, the complementary arts of statecraft and war. *Pace* Franklin Roosevelt, it is the rare schoolboy today who recognizes names such as Sherman and Sheridan, to say nothing of others such as Vandegrift and Courtney Hodges, and the same students who don't know who George Marshall was are sometimes not exactly sure who was President of the United States from 1933 to 1945. If one were to tell them that the survival of the Western democracies was at one time very largely assured by the inspired collaboration of Roosevelt and Marshall, that statement would convey no real meaning to them.

It is nonetheless true, and it is indeed almost fortuitous that it should have been, for it was neither inevitable nor likely that George Catlett Marshall should have become Chief of Staff of the

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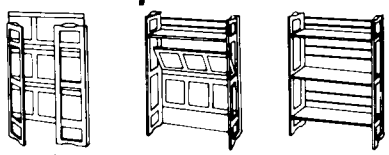

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U.S. Army at precisely the time when his talents were indispensable, that is, on the eve of the outbreak of war in Europe in 1939. In the thirty-seven years that had passed since his first assignment, as second lieutenant in the Thirtieth Infantry Regiment in the Philippines, his progress in the Army had fallen far short of the spectacular. During World War I, to be sure, by being in the right place at the right time, he had had the good fortune to serve successively as assistant Chief of Staff to the First Division, the First Army, and the Eighth Corps, rising to the temporary rank of colonel and winning the confidence of General John J. Pershing so completely that the commander of the American Expeditionary Force made him his aide de camp after the Armistice. But peacetime brought reversion to his permanent rank (he was not to be a colonel again until 1933) and posts that were neither glamorous nor rewarding.

HIS CONTEMPORARY, that favorite of fortune Douglas MacArthur, who emerged from the war as a brigadier general, ascended swiftly, via the superintendency of West Point and a command in the Philippines, to the position of Chief of Staff of the Army in 1933. But Marshall's lot was a hitch in Tientsin and a series of school assignments, and his experience of command was largely confined to Civilian Conservation Corps camps in Georgia and South Carolina and the Illinois National Guard. As late as June 1938, a newly minted brigadier, he was far from the center of power and responsibility, commanding the Fifth Brigade and the local C.C.C. district at Vancouver Barracks in the state of Washington. It was only then that his fortunes changed, when MacArthur's successor as Chief of Staff, General Malin Craig, who had served with Pershing in France and knew Marshall's qualities, called him to the War Plans Division in the capital and almost immediately made him Deputy Chief of Staff, positioning Marshall to take over from him when he retired a year later. For that preferment Marshall had formidable rivals, who, however, made the mistake of campaigning for the job through friends in the White House. His own silence seems to have commended him to the President, and, in April 1939, he informed Marshall that the position was his.

How Marshall withstood the many disappointments he had to suffer before his great chance came is well reflected in the pages of the first of the projected six volumes of his papers, a compilation that is designed to include his most significant personal and official correspondence, speeches, and statements. Even a casual reading of these miscellaneous pieces, which range from thank-you notes to letters to fellow officers about professional matters, and from lectures on marching and staff organization to drafts of articles for service journals, make it clear that Marshall wasted no time in bemoaning the fact that cushier billets went to other men but approached every assignment as a new and fascinating complex of problems, the solutions to which he was determined to find. Even more impressive was his never flagging search for ways in which to improve the Army's operational efficiency and to prepare it to meet another challenge to the nation's security when it came, as he was sure it would.

As early as 1920, in an article in the *Infantry Journal*, he was reminding his fellow officers that in World War I the U.S. Army had faced a deteriorating German force and hence was "without modern experience in the first stages of a war." In 1925, from Tientsin, he wrote to General Pershing that "our equipment, administrative procedure and training requirements are all too complicated for anything but a professional army" and that officers showed little talent in tactical problems and troop-leading. As assistant commandant at Fort Benning at the end of the 1920s, he sought to correct these weaknesses by a series of remarkable lectures on tactics and by field exercises that were widely admired, and he simultaneously began to keep a black book of promising students, which included such names as Bradley, Stilwell, Collins, Ridgway, and Bedell Smith. In 1933, after having helped stage two corps area maneuvers, he wrote to the Commandant of the Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth that "our teaching and system has to be materially modified if we are to avoid a chaotic state of affairs in the first two months of a campaign with a major power." There can have been few officers in the U.S. Army before 1939 who had thought as deeply and systematically as he about organizing and training a combat force and about the problems of transforming a peacetime army into one that could meet the shock of war.

It is the great weakness of Leonard Mosley's biography of Marshall that it does not tell us very much about how its subject gave practical expression to his pre-1939 reflections upon these things. His intention is commendable enough—to write a reasonably short account of Marshall's career, not only as soldier but as Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense as well, and to do so without the sometimes deadening detail of the three-volume life by Forrest Pogue and with more attention to Marshall's personal life—and it is not unsuccessful. But one wishes that there was rather less about the Chief of Staff's reaction to Eisenhower's affair with Kay Summersby and about his own friendship with ladies of high degree and rather more about what he actually thought and did on the job.

In Mr. Mosley's coverage of the years from 1939 until the United States' entry into the war, for example, there is virtually nothing about the new Chief's views on such things as the size of the Army that was needed in view of the threat overseas, the necessity of a draft and the problems that was bound to raise, and the kind of troop-training that Hitler's new techniques of war made advisable. There is nothing much on the work of the War Plans Division or how it was affected by the Tripartite Pact of September 1940; there is no adequate account of the slow emergence of a strategy to prepare the U.S. for the possibility of simultaneous action by Germany and Japan against this country, a process that began with Roosevelt's strategy statement to the Secretaries of State, War, and Navy in January 1941, and eventuated in Marshall's Statement of Ultimate Requirements in September, which was the vital underpinning of the so-called Victory Program. Finally, one looks in vain for any discussion of the basic prewar strategical decision, that the Atlantic rather than the Pacific theater was to be given priority of effort.

MORE REGRETTABLE is the absence, in the chapters on the war itself, of any thorough analysis of Marshall's partnership with Roosevelt in the determination of American strategy. When the conflict was over and Marshall was being hailed as the "organizer of victory," it was often assumed that he was also the author of all of the important strategical decisions on the American side. The truth of the matter is that the President was very conscious of his constitutional duty as Commander-in-Chief and did not hesitate to overrule his service chiefs when he thought it necessary; and, in a brilliant essay, Kent Roberts Greenfield once identified twenty

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distinct cases when he did so. His influence was particularly dominant in the period before Pearl Harbor, when he insisted, against the violent objections of Marshall and the other Chiefs, upon a program of all-out aid to Britain, China, and the Soviet Union at the expense of our own military preparations, hoping that this might prevent our direct involvement in the war. At the same time, he directed his staff planners to prepare the strategy that would be needed if his deterrent policy failed, and in this sense, and to an extent not recognized by Mr. Mosley, his contribution to the prewar mobilization of American strength was as important as Marshall's.

Once we were involved in the conflict, the President was more inclined than his associate Churchill to leave strategic planning to the military, but there were notable cases when he rejected their advice, as he did in the question of going into North Africa in 1942; and there were other cases in which he took the strategic initiative, as he did in 1943 in declaring unconditional surrender to be the war aim of the Allies. There is no evidence that Marshall resented this. He was too much the follower of Clausewitz to forget that war is the continuation of politics by other means and too well schooled in the American military tradition to doubt the legitimacy of civilian supremacy in decisionmaking.

AS FOR the President, while he might on occasion have felt it necessary to modify Marshall's European strategy, he recognized its essential soundness and was aware that it was Marshall's stubborn opposition to the British preference for the indirect approach that prevented an indefinite prolongation of the war against Germany. (He probably relished his Chief's outburst at the Cairo Conference, when he interrupted a Churchill speech about the necessity of an Allied assault upon the island of Rhodes and said bluntly: "God forbid that I should try to dictate . . . but not one American soldier is going to die on that goddamned beach!")

It was also clear to Roosevelt that Allied progress in the Pacific theater was largely due to his Chief of Staff's ability to overcome the British tendency to regard the Pacific as a sideshow and, even more, to his success in keeping the running feud between General MacArthur and the U.S. Navy from crippling operational efficiency. Finally, the President was frank to admit that Marshall was the indispensable man in maintaining the kind of public and Congressional support that the armed forces needed in the critical years of the war, after 1943, when there was a widespread tendency to take victory for granted and to resent inconvenience and regard sacrifice as unnecessary. He meant what he said when he told Marshall, after he had picked Eisenhower for the Normandy command, "I didn't feel I could sleep at ease if you were out of Washington!"

Marshall's postwar services to his country, as President Truman's Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense, were distinguished, and Mr. Mosley does them justice in the second half of his book. But his greatest achievement was during World War II, when, in Winston Churchill's words,

> under [his] guiding hand, the mighty and valiant formations which swept across France and Germany were brought into being and perfected in an amazingly short space of time . . . and to an extent that seems almost incredible . . . the supply of commanders capable of manoeuvring the vast organisms of modern armies and groups of armies, and of moving them with unsurpassed celerity, were also found wherever they were needed.

It is a pity that it is precisely this unparalleled accomplishment that is now receding into a forgotten past.

GORDON A. CRAIG

Gordon A. Craig is the J. E. Wallace Sterling Professor of Humanities Emeritus at Stanford University.

PLUS ÇA CHANGE . . .

The Consequences of Party Reform by Nelson W. Polsby

(Oxford University Press, 288 pp., $17.50)

Social scientists, like everyone else, have a tendency to look at the present and pronounce it uniquely different from the past, often as the worst of times, sometimes as the best. Nelson Polsby, in his new book, *Consequences of Party Reform*, is convinced that we live in the worst of times, politically. He clearly does not think that our two most recent Presidents, Carter and Reagan, have been up to the job. Their failings may be explained by the fact that they are "the two most nationally *in*experienced in American history," although in the past when the duties of the Presidency were simpler, "more seasoned candidates were routinely the only ones considered for the job."

These are dubious assumptions. As Polsby himself acknowledges in a footnote, Grover Cleveland and Woodrow Wilson never worked in Washington before reaching the White House. The only one of three war-hero Presidents, Zachary Taylor, Ulysses Grant, and Dwight Eisenhower, to hold public office before being elected was Grant, and he only briefly served as interim Secretary of War. Chester Arthur and Calvin Coolidge, who inherited the Presidency after short periods as Vice President, had never served in Washington before being nominated on the national ticket. In any case, as Arthur Schlesinger Jr., has recently noted (*Encounter*, January 1983),

> The 1880 choice—James A. Garfield versus Winfred Scott Hancock—was no more inspiring than the choice the Republic endured in 1980. The dreary candidacies of those post-Civil War years moved Lord Bryce to write his famous chapter on 'Why Great Men Are Not Chosen President.'

There have been changes in the background of our Presidential candidates, but these seem to follow a cyclical pattern. Between 1880 and the end of the Roosevelt era, prior service as a governor was common. Congressional, largely Senatorial experience, took over in 1960, when Kennedy ran against Nixon, and remained dominant until Carter's nomination in 1976. The 1980 election was the first in which two former governors ran against each other since the Roosevelt-Dewey contest in 1944.

Political scientists, noting the earlier shift from governors to Senators, explained it as reflecting an awareness by the "nominators" that Congressional experience had become a more important requirement for carrying out the Presi-

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dential role than an administrative background. More recently, the return to nominating governors has been interpreted as reflecting the growing disdain for all aspects of the federal government, a preference for "outsiders" who share the public's hostility to Washington. But given the failures of the economy under our two most recent ex-governors, the pendulum appears to have swung again, back to Senators who, except for Reubin Askew, are thus far the only "mentionables" in both parties for 1984.

Polsby's emphasis on the lack of national political experience of recent American Presidents makes more sense in a comparative context. As he notes, the stable democracies of Europe, Japan, Israel, and the Commonwealth

> routinely choose their heads of government only from a pool of those previously elected to the national parliament [who are] selected by colleagues to lead a parliamentary party.

In these systems, politicians earn the chance to become prime minister by demonstrating their ability to their professional peers during long service in parliament and in a number of sub-Cabinet and Cabinet posts.

THE AMERICAN willingness to be governed by the inexperienced is nowhere better evidenced than in the fact that, except for the President, few of the people who set or administer policy either in the Cabinet departments or on the White House staff have ever held elective office. Many take these positions for a few years, then return to their regular careers in business, the academy, or the law. Almost all of their peers in other democratic governments are drawn from the ranks of parliament members.

The variation in the selection process is, of course, an artifact of the difference between a government such as ours—designed by its founders to be a weak one, in which the executive and the two houses of Congress are separate and independent and elected for varying terms by different constituencies—and those that evolved under monarchies and have retained a structure in which the executive is dominant. The tenure of the President and his appointees is not dependent on Congressional evaluations, except indirectly through the confirmation process. Unlike the pattern abroad, the President and Cabinet do not constitute the controlling policy committee of the parliamentary majority. Elsewhere, the poli-

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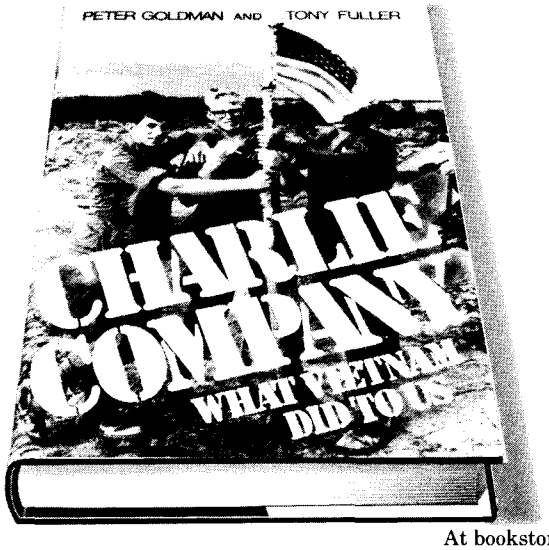

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cies, budgets, and laws proposed by a prime minister and Cabinet are almost invariably adopted, usually with few or no amendments by parliament.

Does what Polsby accurately describes as the more elitist parliamentary system of selecting national officials produce better leaders, more effective government, wiser policies? Many now claim that the separation of powers, the system of checks and balances, and the lack of professionalism in politics are making the United States ungovernable. In an increasingly complicated world, in which the federal government has more domestic and worldwide responsibility than before World War II, some (such as Lloyd Cutler) argue that it is necessary to change our constitutional system along European or Commonwealth lines to secure more competence among leaders and to give them the authority to govern. But it is arguable whether Britain is better governed than the United States. The failure of the British government to face up to the German threat in the 1930s, and its more recent failure to deal with the international recession, presents no model of strong leadership.

Persuaded that a system of professional politicians choosing Presidential nominees is preferable to selecting them by mass populist participation, Polsby contends (and this is the main message of his book) that the quality of our Presidents has seriously declined, precisely because the power of party leaders to determine Presidential nominees has been replaced by a process in which those who win popularity contests win the nomination. Polsby argues that the electorate is competent to influence the direction government should take by its choice between two major party nominees, but that only professional politicians can judge who among them is best qualified to lead their party and administer government.

POLSBY does an excellent job of describing the recent changes in the system of nominating Presidential candidates—which he thinks has brought us to our current pass—and their consequences for party organization. As he notes, prior to 1968 running nationally in the primaries against the wishes of the party leaders was a "high-risk" strategy. The key events that produced a change were those leading up to the 1968 Democratic nomination. Eugene McCarthy and Robert Kennedy used the primaries to challenge Hubert Humphrey, who was the choice of Lyndon Johnson, most Democratic professionals, and the labor union leadership. This proved impossible, since Humphrey's backers controlled most delegate choices. We shall never know, of course, what might have happened if Kennedy had lived, but Polsby thinks he could not have won. As Polsby notes, Kennedy staffer Dick Tuck disclosed a decade later that the best kept secret of the campaign was that "Bobby didn't have enough delegates to win the nomination." Beyond this, the Gallup Poll always showed Humphrey ahead of his rivals among identified Democratic voters up to and including the national convention.

IN REACTION to the "myth" that he had stolen the nomination from the popular choice, and to the bitterness surrounding the convention, Humphrey agreed to the formation of a special commission on party reform, the McGovern-Fraser Commission. That group established new guidelines for choosing convention delegates, banning party caucuses and pure delegate primaries, in favor of selection either through "participatory conventions" (open to all), or candidate primaries. The new rules also called for the representation of various groups, minorities, youth, and women in proportion to their ratio in the population.

The McGovern-Fraser changes, which had considerable effect on the Republican Party as well, were followed by the Watergate-stimulated amendments to the Federal Election Campaign Act in 1974. These set limits on the amount of money that individuals, political action committees, and political parties could contribute to a single campaign for federal office, and required strict reporting on contributions. They also provided for public financing of Presidential campaigns and limited the amount a candidate could spend.

The reforms, as Polsby notes, have had important consequences for political parties, the style of campaigning, and for governing, particularly the way the Presidency operates. The changes in the way delegates are selected clearly reduced the influence of state party leaders, since they no longer could choose unpledged delegates, and the elimination of the unit rule meant that candidates could not bargain for the support of a state organization. Candidates are now forced to announce early, as they are doing this year, and to run in many, if not most, primaries. They must seek delegates everywhere. They must try to create a bandwagon effect, to win in early primaries. Given the limitations on individual campaign contributions, the candidates must raise money from many supporters, rather than concentrate on the big contributors.

The financial regulations have led to a high degree of centralization, both in the contests for the nomination and in the election, since control from the top is the only way a candidate can account for his funds. This discourages local or grassroots activity, as reflected in the decline of locally produced bumper stickers or buttons. To find active supporters and funds, candidates are more likely to run as leaders of a faction rather than of a broad intraparty coalition: the fact that the nomination process is more open increases the number who contest for the Presidency. And the national convention is no longer the place where party leaders come together to nominate, since by then one candidate almost invariably has a majority committed to him. Hence the convention has become a spectacle rather than a decisionmaking arena.

WHILE THE REFORMS have lessened the influence of the big contributors, they have increased the power of the mass media and the new breed of fundraising political consultants. Parties have become a label for voters to pick among alternative candidates packaged by television and the press. Sophisticated mass mailings to raise money have replaced efforts to seek alliances with groups. Dependence on ideologically motivated volunteers has become the norm. Citizen interest organizations, minorities, and women, groups that appeal to the media, have supplanted the old economic interest groups, business, labor, and farmers, as the principal sponsors of candidates.

Although the major media are liberal, the new situation, according to Polsby, gives an advantage to the Republicans since they are more cohesive ideologically. Primary campaign divisions do not disrupt them as much as they do the ideologically more disparate Democrats. The Democrats have lost three out of the last four Presidential elections, in large part because they tore themselves apart in the nomination fights. On the other hand, the G.O.P. suffered from the same malady in 1964 and 1976, and polls indicate that in 1980 John Anderson picked up almost as many votes from disgrun-

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tled Republicans as from Democrats.

Jimmy Carter is for Polsby the prototypical example of a President produced by the nonparty populist system. His inability to govern was a direct result of his conception of the Presidency as above politics, of his success in reaching the White House without making deals or building a coalition of interest groups. As President, Carter ignored his party, both inside and out of Congress, failed to recognize the need to bargain with interest groups to build support for legislation, and appealed over the heads of Congress and the interest groups to the people.

Polsby pictures Reagan as a typical Washington outsider; in fact he has returned to more traditional political ways, both in running for office and in heading the federal government. As a candidate whose personal views were out of step with those of the majority of the electorate, he consciously sought to build a new majority coalition. According to Reagan pollster Richard Wirthlin, Ronald Reagan won among Republicans,

> not because his ideological positions were congruent with the electorate, but rather, in spite of a substantial ideological gap between himself and the average Republican. The extent of that gap was remarkable. In Illinois, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania, Ronald Reagan was further from the average individual's ideological position than even Congressman John Anderson.

Mindful of the limited appeal of his program, Reagan focused "on strategies that would attract voters most directly and negatively affected by the economic failures of the Carter Administration."

As Chief Executive, he has built on a very different set of gubernatorial experiences than his predecessor. Unlike Carter, who as governor had dealt with a weakly organized, largely one-party legislature, Reagan had worked with a strongly partisan, well organized one, and had learned to compromise with leaders of both parties. As Thomas Moore, Hoover Institution economist, who has served as a Reagan adviser, points out (*Inquiry*, November 1982):

> While in Sacramento, Reagan converted the state income tax into one of the most steeply graduated in the nation, introduced withholding taxes, raised the sales tax, and sharply increased taxes on business. He campaigned for cutting welfare and total spending, but during his two terms, welfare spending rose 61 percent and total state spending increased faster than in most other states.

Governor Reagan's record on social issues also confirms the impression that he is an effective politician, not an ideologue. He publicly endorsed the Equal Rights Amendment as it was being ratified by the legislature, signed California's law legalizing abortion, and supported environmental-control legislation hailed by environmentalist groups as the strongest in the nation. As Reagan biographer Bill Boyarsky notes,

> he was pushed by a legislature concerned about preserving California's resources; and he was sensitive to the political power of the environmental movement, which was at its peak during his governorship.

President Reagan is increasingly behaving like Governor Reagan, ready to shift policy to keep in touch with the electorate and the Congress. Reagan may, as Polsby charges, be "nationally inexperienced," but he is more politically experienced—and adept—than his predecessor. Where Carter delegated the undelegatable while reading memos at 5 a.m., Reagan remains "detached" from the day-to-day running of his government, using the charisma of his office to win support for his program. He is following the model of F.D.R., who spent most of his time managing potential dissidence in the political arena, leaving the

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operation of the government to people like Harry Hopkins and Harold Ickes.

Although Polsby's account of the reforms and their consequences is both accurate and perceptive, his book is already dated. The Democratic Party is in the process of re-reforming itself. The Hunt Commission on party rules has changed the delegate selection rules once again, giving the state parties and elected officials considerable weight. The pendulum has swung back to candidates with Washington experience.

Although the rules of the game are changing once again, what remains the same are the electoral and structural realities. To secure legislation, even the most rhetorically ideological President—or Congressional leader—must build coalitions out of the disparate elements of the American polity. Tip O'Neill once said that if the United States elected its government by proportional representation, as in much of Europe, the Democratic Party would break into five parties, and it may be added that the Republicans would subsume two or three additional ones. Strong Presidents—Lincoln, Wilson, both Roosevelts—had their troubles governing, and were opposed by sizable segments of their own parties. The structural sources of these difficulties remain; the reforms (and the re-reforms), when they are not counterproductive, are at best palliatives.

SEYMOUR MARTIN LIPSET

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TROUBLE IN PARADISE

Margaret Mead and Samoa: The Making and Unmaking of an Anthropological Myth by Derek Freeman

(Harvard University Press, 379 pp., $20)

This book is a personal attack on a great woman, a great humanitarian, and a great anthropologist. Although Derek Freeman, professor of anthropology emeritus at the Australian National University, claims in his subtitle that his book is an account of "the making and unmaking of an anthropological myth" about Samoan adolescence, his primary aim appears to be to make a name for himself by unmaking Margaret Mead's reputation. In setting out for Samoa at the start of her career, Margaret Mead risked her health and her life in the hope of learning a better way to handle adolescence than the one prevailing in her own homeland. Freeman calls that kind of motivation "homespun" and "romantic." I call it human, and I see nothing in his account or in hers to make me change my mind. Mead's work undeniably was inspired by humanitarian concerns, rather than by the more strictly professional, and also valuable concerns common among academics, but Freeman's efforts to expose the flaws in her scholarship only serve to raise questions about his own, less generous motives. Based on selective and misleading evidence, his study fails to persuade that Samoans are the neurotic adolescents he claims or that Margaret Mead was an incompetent, unethical anthropologist.

Among Freeman's most misleading assertions is his position that all the Samoan islands are, for his purposes, identical. In fact, however, the island that he visited as a student in the early 1940s—which was when he resolved to one day write "a refutation of Mead's Samoan findings"—was nearly 200 miles away from the island where Mead had worked in 1925-1926. His island, Upolu, was then British, or Western Samoa; hers, Ta'u, was under American control. Surely it's questionable anthropology to pretend that colonialism has no effect on culture—that there is no substantive difference between Samoan society in the two groups of islands, despite their radically different experiences of the Western world (British Samoa chose to fight for independence; American Samoa elected, rather more peacefully, to remain staunchly American).

FREEMAN would have us believe that all Samoans, regardless of the subtle cultural variations that inevitably exist from village to village, island to island, suffer from a neurotic, stressful, often violent adolescence and live in a rigidly authoritarian competitive society. Given the history of British colonialism, it would not be surprising if some Samoans did indeed succumb to some form of neurosis. But that is hardly ground for generalizing the diagnosis to all the islanders. The Samoa that Margaret Mead saw in 1925 was an island far removed, in time and space, from such pressures. It was an island where people learned to grow to maturity without the stress that besets adolescents in the Western world even more today than when she made her study. The lifestyle she described was relaxed, and problems were settled through discussion rather than violence. Margaret Mead never pretended that there were no rules of conduct; she merely suggested that the rules sprang from within, from principles of behavior, well learned in infancy and childhood, rather than from rules imposed by some external authoritarian structure. And from virtually all accounts, except Freeman's, that is how Samoans are today.

As for Freeman's subtitle, "The Making and Unmaking of an Anthropological Myth," that too is misleading. The topic Freeman alludes to is the old nature/nurture controversy: is our behavior determined by inheritance or by culture? Of course the topic, so crudely stated, has effectively been dead for years, raising its head primarily when racists try to prove the superiority of their own branch of humanity by asserting the very real myth of genetic "purity."

Freeman claims Margaret Mead was an avowed cultural determinist, under the heavy influence of people such as Franz Boas and Ruth Benedict, two of the most important early figures in American cultural anthropology. She "dismissed biology, or nature, as being of no significance whatsoever . . . and claimed the determinism of culture, or nurture, to be absolute." I note that whereas he is fond of

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quoting Mead in her own words whenever he can use them to his advantage, he can find no quotation to substantiate this foundation stone of his argument.

In fact one of Mead's strengths was that she always recognized her limitations and worked within them. Freeman does not tell us what training he had to qualify him in either cultural or physical anthropology, but Dr. Mead made no bones about her lack of training in biology. In not taking up that side of the issue she was in no way denying the biological influence on human behavior, but properly left that to biologists. And quite contrary to Freeman's repeated assertions, the nature/nurture issue was *not* what Margaret Mead set out to investigate.

The myth, then, is of Freeman's own making, and the unmaking would be laughable if one had not been compelled to wade through 300 tediously repetitive, and often nasty pages to reach it. In his final paragraph, on page 302, Freeman pompously concludes "The time is now conspicuously due, in both anthropology and biology, for a synthesis. . . ." My own education in anthropology began some thirty years ago, and this debate over a "synthesis" was old hat then. We still do not know precisely to what extent and in what specific areas of human behavior nature *or* nurture predominate, and Freeman does nothing to help us understand that vitally important balance. Most of us today eschew either extreme, as did Margaret Mead. But at the time she went to Samoa the controversy was indeed alive, and on each side there were those who argued for the absolute supremacy of *their* explanation of human behavior. Mead never was one of these; she merely left it to the biologists to present their findings with the freedom and honesty with which she presented hers, and she hoped that they would respect and consider her findings just as she respected and considered theirs.

FREEMAN'S "refutation" of Margaret Mead's work in Samoa rests on four points of attack: first, her preparedness for the field; second, her academic ability and perceptivity; third, her field method and technique; and fourth, her motives. With respect to the first two, he clearly demonstrates his own method, that of selectivity and innuendo. Thus, according to Freeman, Boas "sent the 23-year-old Mead to Samoa" and "devised" Margaret Mead's researches. For this "spirited young cultural determinist," "the way was now clear. She would be going to Samoa, after two years of graduate study in anthropology, to do research among Samoan girls on Boas' special problem."

> The twenty-three-year-old Margaret Mead. . . . did not, as she has recorded, "really know much about fieldwork," and in the rush before she left New York she had no occasion for any study of the Samoan language.

With a revealing show of male chauvinism, Freeman even mentions how this "young female student" included as part of her field equipment some "cotton dresses." This irrelevant piece of information he gleaned from his avid reading of Mead's writings, scholarly, popular, and private, randomly mixed to cast her not only as a mindless Boasian, but as a rather empty-headed, silly girl.

WITH REGARD TO her fieldwork, Freeman similarly takes pains to make Mead look idiotic, again by referring to accounts in which she gladly told tales on herself—tales about her romantic misconceptions at that early age, and about her anything but romantic arrival in Samoa: Freeman makes much of the presence of American battleships, of airplanes and a ragtime band, and a room in a "ramshackle hotel" in Pago Pago. He also sternly rebukes her for choosing to live with an American family in the comfort of a "European style house" rather than with a Samoan family. Apart from the fact that he gives her no credit for being one of the very first anthropologists, male or female, to do such exotic fieldwork, he is simply wrong on the facts. Margaret Mead did not live with an American family. She chose the island of Ta'u because of its relative isolation from Western influence, and very deliberately chose to accept a small back room in the one foreign building there, the naval dispensary, as better suited to her specific goals. She did this because she was worried about her health and was unsure how well she could work while living under a Samoan roof and eating Samoan food. But her decision was primarily academic: on such a small island, to have settled in with one family in one village would have placed her in special and perhaps restricted relationships with other families and other villages. Further, given the open architecture of the traditional Samoan house (a roof with neither outside walls nor inner partitions), no privacy would have been possible; and for her inquiries into the delicate topic of the adolescence of girls, Margaret Mead judged correctly that both she and the girls would require privacy. She knew perfectly well what limitations this imposed. Even today a comparable choice would by no means be uncommon, and better by far than any pretense of "going native." Freeman has some valid criticisms of both Mead's field experience and her conclusions, valid in hindsight that is, but none that were not apparent

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to Margaret Mead even while she was in the field.

Freeman's caricature of Margaret Mead's motives are even more ill founded. He alleges that she set out to prove the Boasian thesis of cultural determinism. Margaret Mead was always far more interested in understanding than in "proving." She herself admitted that she could have chosen six other places for this research and come up with contrary findings. And she also stated clearly at the start of her long career, what was true of her whole life, manifest in almost every action—her concern for humanity, and her deep belief that Western civilization, full of wonders as it is, has lost a lot of wisdom in the process of its development.

Freeman attacks Dr. Mead for using informants. Apart from a few snippets of descriptive ethnography from his own studies, Freeman relies even more heavily on informants, and what informants! His random collection of quotations, as unscrupulously selective as ever, comes largely from early travelers and missionaries, writers and poets, with no anthropological training. The couple of contemporary anthropologists whom he cites for having produced material contrary to Mead's have themselves expressed respect for her Samoan work. Lowell D. Holmes, for example, said he thought Mead's account "remarkably" reliable; and both he and Eleanor Gerber readily saw, in the simple passage of time, explanation enough for any discrepancies between their data and that of Mead. While Freeman expects us to believe his Samoan informants, even when at his behest they are trying to remember events that passed some forty years earlier, he also expects us to believe that Mead's Samoan informants deliberately told her lies. But then, with wonderful British class-consciousness, Freeman only seems to deal with Samoans who are chiefs, prime ministers, or "educated," and he even states his preference for those who have been educated in New Zealand or Australia.

Nor do I think much of his "scientific" experimentation on Samoan children for the purpose of "testing Mead's assertion that in Samoa 'filial affection is diffused among a large group of relatives.' " He often accuses Mead of working under artificial conditions, or of creating them, yet here he blandly has "the women of an extended family walk away from an infant one at a time" so as to observe at what point it became "agitated." Even if the experiment were valid (let alone ethical), its validity, like the rest of Freeman's tedious argument, would only reflect on Mead's researches insofar as his denial of the significance of time and space is valid. The most casual visit to these islands suggests the likelihood of there being many subtle cultural variations, even on one island, according to whether a village is on the coast (and on which coast at that), or on high land, in a valley or on a ridge, in isolation from or proximity to other villages, and so forth.

Given his own dubious methodology, I doubt if Freeman's book is worth very much either as anthropology or biology. To my mind it deserves review only because it could do harm to anthropology, and particularly to the kind of humanistic anthropology that Margaret Mead also preferred to petty academic rivalry. It also does not do much for the people of Samoa, whose "darker" side Freeman takes such pains to stress in contrast to Mead's more gentle account.

In the words of one Samoan, Lelei Lelaulu, replying to Freeman in *Newsweek* (February 28), "Are we Samoans now to be known as a nation of sex-starved, suicidal rapists? I much prefer my previous reputation as a free-loving orgiast. . . ." And in the same issue, the widow of the late Prime Minister of Western Samoa (and therefore surely commendable to Freeman), Fetaui Mata'afa, in denying that Samoa is "the polluted populace of Derek Freeman," says, "There may be a more balanced, and beautiful society somewhere on earth, but I have neither seen nor heard of it." Admittedly, a very partial Samoan point of view; still, it could almost be Margaret Mead talking, half a century ago.

COLIN M. TURNBULL

Colin M. Turnbull is professor of anthropology at George Washington University. He is the author of *The Forest People* (Touchstone Books) and the forthcoming *The Human Cycle* (Simon and Schuster).

THE PARTY'S OVER

So it's daylight on the street
Inside the air is frosted
By its stale parfait
Of smoke
the fog
Off the river in lazy plumes
Hangs in the branches of
The plane tree
you've fallen
Asleep on the wine-colored sofa
One leg hooked over its low
Worn arm
blouse open
& tied loosely at the waist
So I empty the ashtrays gather
The glasses & hustle out
The last friend finally sober enough
To find her way home
& all the time
She's humming that wicked song *Rien*
De rien Non je ne regrette . . .
& before I know it
I'm humming it off & on & I don't
Know why all of a sudden I'm crying
I don't know why
I want to wake you I just want you
To explain
yet I don't
Or I can't & I won't sleep now anyway
I'll just sit up talking to the one sparrow
Living up in the open attic eaves
The one sparrow who listens
so patiently
To every confession & the weather & who knows
Who only appears to be so ordinary
As she goes & comes & goes

DAVID ST. JOHN

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HEY GOOD LOOKIN'

American Beauty
by Lois Banner
(Knopf, 352 pp., $17.95)

Skin to Skin: Eroticism in Dress
by Prudence Glynn
(Oxford University Press, 157 pp., $19.95)

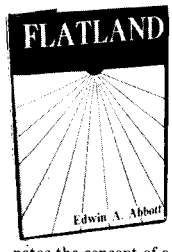
Beauty, like so much else, is a matter of timing. The caprices and cruelties of fashion are such that a little exposure to them makes you understand the appeal of metempsychosis: perhaps on the second go our silhouettes will all be the right size and shape. Consider the frustration of the dainty-breasted teenagers of the 1930s, growing up to find that in the 1940s and early 1950s they were required to have mammaries the size of anti-aircraft missiles. Whenever I temporarily lose my mind and try to purchase designer jeans, I am reminded that my hips haven't been in style since 1952. And a girl I know, a buxom, vermilion-haired goddess who looks like a Rossetti walking, causes the pasty and spineless men of today to cower and run.

At least the twentieth-century woman doesn't have to wait too long for her type to come round again. The Victorian woman, Lois Banner reminds us, was imprisoned in—or excluded from—a mold that could last decades, and community was not kind to girls whose ideas of comfort or vanity didn't fit the fashion. A young woman of the 1890s in a skirt an indecent three inches from the ground was the victim of catcalls and rotten vegetables from the crowds who followed her through the streets of New York. Another, who in 1913 wore a short (whatever that meant) bathing suit, was assaulted by an angry mob in, of all places, Atlantic City.

Delicate and fairylike, the little lady of the steel engravings, with her tiny waist, sloping shoulders, and rosebud mouth, was the *belle idéale* for much of the nineteenth century. (Banner's survey of styles in beauty goes from the 1820s to 1921, the year of the first Miss America contest, with a final chapter bringing us to the present.) This appearance denoted the frailty (hence, gentility) that the citizens of a young country were keen on, and its maintenance promoted actual ill health. The deforming underwear necessary to produce the Scarlett O'Hara waist, the arsenic-eating for a pale complexion, the gossamer clothing that was inadequate protection against winter weather, the avoidance of exercise and hearty food that might make a lady look vulgarly fit—all these often made her literally too ethereal to live, or at least gave her a most unromantic case of the sniffles.

Every style, when it bores the public, fosters an antistyle that begins with the extreme version. In 1868 an *entrepreneuse* named Lydia Thompson knocked the Christmas-tree angel off her tiny feet with her burlesque troupe, the British Blondes. These sturdy girls, of the type that Nathaniel Hawthorne called "beefy," validated the figure, hair color, and existence of women previously thought ill favored. Toward the end of the century, this Hottentot Venus had been coaxed down from her pedestal and allowed to wave her arms and legs a bit. Though in 1882 many Americans had found Lillie Langtry a big, muscular girl, undeserving of all the ballyhoo about her beauty, by the 1890s women riding bicycles and batting tennis balls were a common sight. The model for style and grace from 1895 to the beginning of World War I was the Gibson girl, clearly aristocratic, but athletic too, and one tough cookie. The tight-laced Victorian dolly would flop to the floor at regular intervals, but in the picture Banner selects it is a man who faints at the sight of three cool and invincible Gibson girls.

Numerous interesting tidbits dot Banner's book—that Lafayette was welcomed to Washington by beauty queens from each of the states; that Indian fighters wore their hair long to show they were not afraid of being scalped ("To let it grow," said Buffalo Bill, "was to display sportsmanship and proclaim defiance"); and that one doctor's early skincare products were advertised with the slogan "Dys laughs at time," a line that would be even more resonant had she pointed out that Dys is also the Roman god of Death. Such nice facts, however, are a poor reward for a slog through Banner's dowdy prose, fatally infected with term-paper listlessness (she is a professor of history at George Washington University). She promises in her introduction that her book will not be sociological, but if you have always understood the word "sociological" to be a synonym for "dull," her book is very sociological indeed. In it people are born into "family units" and graduate to "manufactory situations," "office situations," and, if you can believe it, "frontier situations." Banner's editor, of course, must come in for some of the blame; a sentence such as the following clearly indicates that someone was asleep at the blue pencil—"Thus the leg-of-mutton sleeves of the 1830s became so large that women had to enter rooms sideways be-



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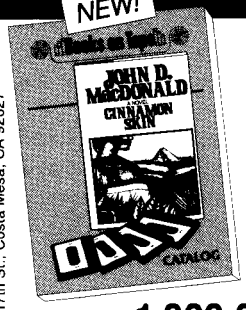

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cause they could not fit through regular doors frontward." And both of them believe that Lorelei Lee was a character in *Guys and Dolls*. As Miss Adelaide of the Hot Box would say, not bloodly likely.

Worse than any of this is Banner's disapproving tone, as she grad-grinds on about female vanity and comes up with the most amazing conclusions, "It is possible," she writes,

> that independent women in films were intended, as one commentator has argued, to oppress women by encouraging the belief that job markets and career ladders were open to them when in fact they were not.

Go figure that one out. No, the main problem with this book is that Banner seems to have chosen a topic for which she has little sympathy—indeed, often avoiding it altogether and rambling off into discussions of Victorian theater or socializing—except as a platform from which to argue that beauty should be an expression of good health, character, and braininess. This is not a new idea. Thomas Hardy wrote that the importance of intelligence in a modern industrial society had rendered the mindless, Greek sort of beauty obsolete in men, and, within a century or two, might do the same for women. I do not think, however, that he was happy about this.

WHAT A RELIEF to turn from this superficial solemnity to the deep frivolity of Prudence Glynn. Writing in a tone that sounds now like a jolly gossip rabbiting away over the teacups, now like a vivacious nanny acting out all the characters in the storybook while remembering her duty to inculcate moral values ("Many [kings] were given to . . . some very nasty habits"), Glynn, the fashion editor of *The Times*, uses her merriment as a foil for her extensive knowledge and dizzyingly high standards (a slob, to her, is someone whose dressing gown does not match the herbaceous border).

Skin to Skin is a cheeky, cheery tour of parts of the body through the ages, a witty survey of the many ways both sexes have tried to vanquish time, flesh, and the censor, and to overcome the unfortunate fact that humans have no mating season (when one anatomical feature is exposed or emphasized too long, it begins to pall and must give way to a substitute). Glynn's text is vividly illustrated by a wide array of caricatures, advertisements, movie stills, and paintings, as well as fashion photographs, many of which are little lessons in how to stimulate those jaded glands: a lady in fur-trimmed velvet gloves and a pearl rope dripping down a narrow décolletage, for instance, is getting maximal impact out of minimal exposure. In her chapters on robes of state, dangerous clothing, the influence of the media, and what goes on under it all, Glynn isn't short on sociological (relating to society) observations—she says that the uniquely American obsession with legs indicates that women here have always been on a more nearly equal footing with men, if not the pursuers in the marriage race. But where she shines even brighter is in the evocative word-picture. The notorious statue of George Washington as a Roman emperor, she writes, does not

> show GW as a sempiternal conquerer but as somebody who has just donned hastily whatever was nearest to hand in an emergency and who seems to be pointing the way not to Olympus but to the Fire Exit.

And she amuses herself and us with such horsey conceits as "the boss . . . in a Reid and Taylor specially woven something or other, possibly containing hairs of the tail of the last Derby winner" and the only theoretically exciting strapless gowns of the 1950s, "about as liable to fall off, boned to perdition as they were, as an Olympic show-jumper."

Glynn isn't solely a flibbertigibbet, however. This chronicle of the eternal losing battle has its moments of sadness and reflection too. Considering the anything-goes-off fashions of the 1960s, she writes, "As moral standards tumbled like plates in a china-smashing stall," and then, with a sigh—"or to be more generous, as the human spirit was able more freely to express its sexual longings in dress, as Psyche might see Cupid in daylight without death. . . ." Like that drawing that shows a lady at her dressing table when you squint at in one way, a death's-head if you blink the other eye, our various forms of deception-in-dress poignantly acknowledge the gap between what we want and what we are, a distance so inadequately cloaked in satin and silk.

RHODA KOENIG

Rhoda Koenig is literary editor of *New York* magazine.

BRIEF REVIEWS

The Wars by Timothy Findley

(Dell, 254 pp., $3.95)

Pacifism is no doubt morally and historically untenable, but if you come to that conclusion too easily, read this novel. It will complicate your views and trouble your sleep. The time is 1915, the place is the Western front, and the subject is the slaughter of the innocent. All too familiar? Certainly. Yet by the use of modernist techniques of narrative, Mr. Findley has made it new. His story of the awful initiation of a nineteen-year-old Canadian soldier is poignant and powerful. He has crossed *Catch 22* with *All Quiet on the Western Front* to produce a novel that will forever leave a daub of emotion on the reader's recollection of a place called Ypres.

J. B.

Who Gets What From Government by Benjamin Page

(University of California Press, 264 pp., $15.95)

In dense and even exhausting detail, the author reviews the tax system and the entire public spending program of the federal government in an effort to make good on the promise of his title. His book is a model of objective reasoning and tight argument; you couldn't put a communion wafer between the evidence and the conclusions. These are that the tax system is deeply regressive and becoming more so; that more of the social welfare dollar goes to providers of services, such as doctors, than to direct grants such as food stamps (only 1 percent of the budget) and programs that benefit the poor, such as job training; that "public goods" spending, such as defense, benefits everyone—in that it protects us all—but that it channels more tax money to wealthier than to poorer Americans; and that federal laws and regulations, even environmental and minimum wage standards, redound to the benefit of more

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prosperous Americans. The author, a professor of political science at the University of Chicago, concedes that an economic system based on material incentives sets structural limits to equality (if "pro-poor" taxes were too high, investment and work effort would decline), but he argues from comparative data that we are still a long way from reaching these borders of justice. The narrower income gap between rich and poor prevailing in the other industrial democracies shows that more equality is possible without sacrificing economic efficiency. This book contains every economic fact and figure you are ever likely to want to know, and many of them are incendiary: as, for example, that the top 1 percent of income earners in 1966 paid only 18 percent in income taxes.

J. B.

CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 2*

ism, an appeal that strikes terror in many hearts.

Clearly a "pacifist nationalism" is qualitatively different from Germany's historical "aggressive nationalism." What Joffe fails to notice is that the most dangerous elements of Nazism are just those that are missing in the Greens' program: racism, militarism, aggressive conquest, and blind allegiance to authority.

The fact that the Greens are "ensconsed in several regional parliaments" does not mean that they are not working "within the political system." Furthermore, the question of West German commitment to democracy is still an open one, and the Greens' focus on participation and citizen responsibility may be the best thing that ever happened to democracy in that country, whose democratic traditions are so fragile.

BEVERLY CRAWFORD
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

WILL OPEC COLLAPSE?

To the editors:

Charles Krauthammer, in his otherwise well-reasoned article, missed the main point of danger in the collapse of OPEC ("The Oil Bust Panic," TNR, February 21). There is a large number of energy-related loans that would become exposed if the price of oil declined more than 15 to 20 percent. Krauthammer dismissed the problem with the specious argument that Canada and Texas are not likely to default. It is not those places that are on the line, but oil and gas companies operating there, as well as in the North Sea and other areas.

The problem is more intractable than in the case of sovereign debt. Monetary authorities have managed to contain the threat of a major country default by coming to the aid of the debtor countries. In the case of energy-related company loans, they do not have this option. With many thousands of different entities involved, bailing out the debtors becomes impractical. As debtors defaulted, banks would have to write off their loans. The aggregate amounts involved are much smaller than in the case of sovereign debt, but the effects are cumulative. The combined equity of the world's one hundred largest banks is $145 billion. The overhang of doubtful sovereign debt is about $300 billion. It would not take many billions of dollars of actual defaults to bring the solvency of some banks into question. The banking system could be in greater danger of breaking down than it was in 1982.

GEORGE SOROS
New York, New York

To the editors:

Many thanks for Charles Krauthammer's brilliant piece on the demise of the oil cartel. His analysis makes it very clear just how much the world economy stands to benefit from a return to free-market oil pricing, and how some organizations and countries believe in "free enterprise" only as long as the price of the commodity they sell or use as collateral is rising. The collapse of OPEC may be the most positive economic development of the last ten years, if only we allow it to happen.

JOHN LICHTER
Santa Monica, California

The editors welcome correspondence from readers. Letters should include the writer's full name, address, and telephone number; be typed double-spaced; and be held to under 200 words. Letters may be edited for space. Please address letters to: Correspondence, TNR, 1220 19th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

TRB, *from page 4*

it happens about half the time (eighteen of the past thirty years, to be precise). Currently, for example, Democrats control the money-voting House while Republicans control Senate and White House. Who is responsible?

One must sympathize with President Reagan. Lloyd Cutler, one-time counsel to President Carter, writes in *Foreign Affairs* magazine: "The public and the press still expect the President to govern. But the President cannot achieve his overall program, and the public cannot fairly blame the President because he does not have the power to negotiate and execute his program. . . . In each Administration it becomes progressively more difficult to make the present system work effectively on the range of issues, both domestic and foreign, that the United States must now manage even though there is no large consensus."

The group that is addressing these matters calls itself the Constitutional System. It is organizing what could be a national discussion coinciding with the forthcoming bicentennial celebrations. It has attracted some distinguished people as observers, with the organizing leadership in the hands of co-chairmen Lloyd Cutler and C. Douglas Dillon, Secretary of the Treasury under President Kennedy. One sees at its gatherings people like James MacGregor Burns; J. William Fulbright; James Schlesinger; Bruce MacLaury, president of Brookings Institution; and Millicent Fenwick, former Representative from New Jersey. It is a kind of game: here is a group of concerned citizens wondering what the Founding Fathers would have done in their place if they had lived in an age of electronic chips and television.

It must be said that the Founding Fathers seem to have had it all their own way so far: they made the Constitution almost impervious to change (provided, of course, anyone proposes change). They deliberately designed a government intended to make action protracted and controlled. Suppose you get a constitutional amendment over the one-third-plus-one hurdle needed in both Houses of Congress: it can still be blocked by as few as one-eighth of the state legislative bodies—one house in each of thirteen states! Boy, that's tying things up, isn't it? We still have a few years to go before that Bicentennial. Things may change. But the score now is Founding Fathers, 1787; Visitors, 0.

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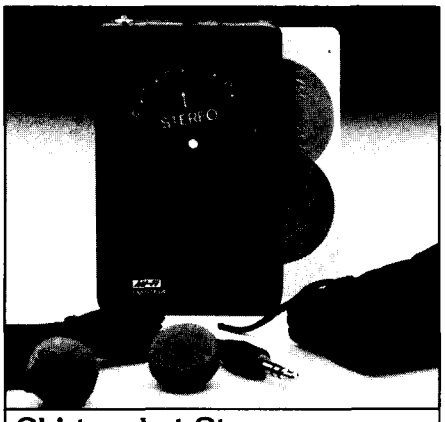

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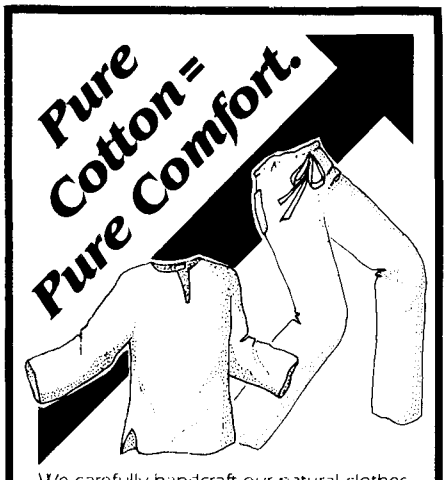

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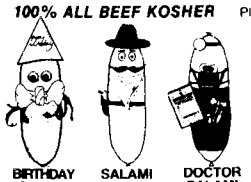

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Straight Stories

AT TNR THERE HAS BEEN a lot of talk lately about former editor Michael Straight's memoir, *After Long Silence* (see "Michael's People," by Allen Weinstein, TNR, March 21), and his revelations about his secret life in the world of Soviet agents. It isn't exactly office gossip, because no one here ever worked with him and because even the more curious and loquacious among us have found little to go on: it's not easy to spin subtle psychological theories about such an eerily elliptical book. Our discussions have been like efforts to diagnose the disease of a distant relative, or at least to react to some of the unsettling symptoms. What could it have been like to seem perfectly healthy for so long (1942-1981)—leading the erratic professional, political, and social life expected of a rich and restless Straight—while the secret spread within? Straight's tenure as editor of TNR during the McCarthy era must have been a problematic phase at best. Week after week he commented on the all-important issue of the day and of his life—Communist espionage; inescapably that entailed some dissembling. Consider this convoluted claim from his 1954 essay, "The Ghost at the Banquet," in TNR's 40th anniversary issue (his "farewell—to THE NEW REPUBLIC and to the world of politics"): "if I knew of any 'secret couriers' [of Communism] in sensitive positions, I wouldn't suppose that keeping it to myself was an act of affirmation in the liberal faith." Since then, of course, Straight has admitted that in fact he had known of such a secret agent (Guy Burgess) and yet kept it to himself. Why then the bizarre proclamation of 1954, half-denying, half-admitting the hidden truth? Could that claim—neither a confession nor quite a cover-up—have been any kind of cure for his conscience?

IN 1979 MICHAEL STRAIGHT said farewell again—this time to the world of art, in *Twigs for an Eagle's Nest*, a collection of reminiscences and essays about his years as deputy chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts (1969-1978). That was before his past espionage connections had been made public and his publishers, plugging for reviews, hailed him as "one of those rare people in U.S. government service: a top bureaucrat who is also an accomplished artist." We at TNR yawned politely and passed over the book. But knowing now how truly unusual this top bureaucrat's outside interests had been, I took another look at *Twigs*. Still pretty dull, except for a moment of drama—droll in 1979, a little darker now. When deputy chairman Michael Straight first went up to Capitol Hill to lobby for more money for his agency, "LIGHGHT"—a one word "poem" written by an obscure poet with the generous ($500) support of N.E.A.—weighed heavily on his conscience. The seven-letter lyric also generated a lot of heat among legislators. "I muttered something in a shy, shamefaced way," Straight wrote in *Twigs*. "I was grateful when one elder statesman of the House laid his hand on my shoulder. 'Son,' he said, 'everyone is entitled to one mistake. AND THAT ONE,' he shouted, 'IS YOURS!' "

WHILE MICHAEL STRAIGHT has been trying to exorcise the Soviet Communist connections in his past, the Chinese Communists have been wishing they'd never heard of his father Willard, TNR's founder. The People's Republic of China is furious that an American court has ordered it to pay up (more than $40 million) on bonds issued back in 1911 to finance railway construction—furious enough to raise the matter with Secretary of State George Shultz during his recent visit and to issue a public denunciation. At the source of this mess, it turns out, is Willard Straight, who in 1909, at the age of 29, set off for Peking as the representative of a consortium of five banks, pursuing Dollar Diplomacy with the blessing of the State Department. Straight's first task was to engineer U.S. participation in the Huguang Railway Loan, which Britain, France, and Germany were all set to make on their own. The initial meeting, Straight reported back, was a "stormy one—characterized by recriminations and innuendo and unmitigated by any measure of personal sympathy or understanding." But he persevered, rallying his bankers' spirits with this optimistic review of their role in the Open Door drama: "we hold the whip hand and stand to profit in the long run by the very situation we have created by your debut into the choice international society of crooks that dances attendance on the Peking Court. We will win in the end all along I think for I feel convinced that we are the only people who are honest, and prepared to give everyone a 'square deal.' " In 1911 the Imperial Chinese government did sign the deal, and bonds were floated to build the link in China's north-south rail network. Seven decades later, the railroad is still running smoothly, but the scene is stormy once again. "The Chinese people are very much concerned about this issue," the Chinese Foreign Ministry warned Secretary Shultz upon his arrival, and Foreign Minister Wu Xueqian presented him with an "aide memoire" full of castigations and claims of sovereign immunity. Here's how, according to that document, the P.R.C. remembers Willard Straight, progressive:

> The so-called Huguang railway's bearer bounds [sic] were one of the means by which the traitorous Qing government, in collusion with the imperialist powers who were carving out spheres of influence in China, intensified its oppression and plunder of the Chinese people to bolster its reactionary rule and repress the people. It stands to reason that the Chinese government refuses to recognize such old external debts. This position of the Chinese government fully conforms to the principles of international law. . . . The Chinese government hopes that the U.S. government will truly shoulder its responsibility, strictly act on the principles of international law, take effective steps to stop the aggravation of events and handle the case properly so that Sino-U.S. relations and normal trade and economic exchanges may not be impaired.

So much, alas, for our founder's dreams of the harmonizing effects of commerce, for his faith in the efficacy of the square deal.

A FOOTNOTE on the Straight footmen: thanks to young Willard Straight's professional rather than social status (he was not yet married to the Whitney heiress who made Michael and TNR possible), he was equipped with a servant in China. Although his Chinese attendant's name happened to be Chang, one biographer reports, Willard preferred to call him William. Young Michael Straight, while living with his brother Whitney in P. G. Wodehouse's elegant London house, also had a servant. His name was Albert, Straight says in his memoir, but the brothers called him John. "All footmen are called John," Whitney explained.

A.H.

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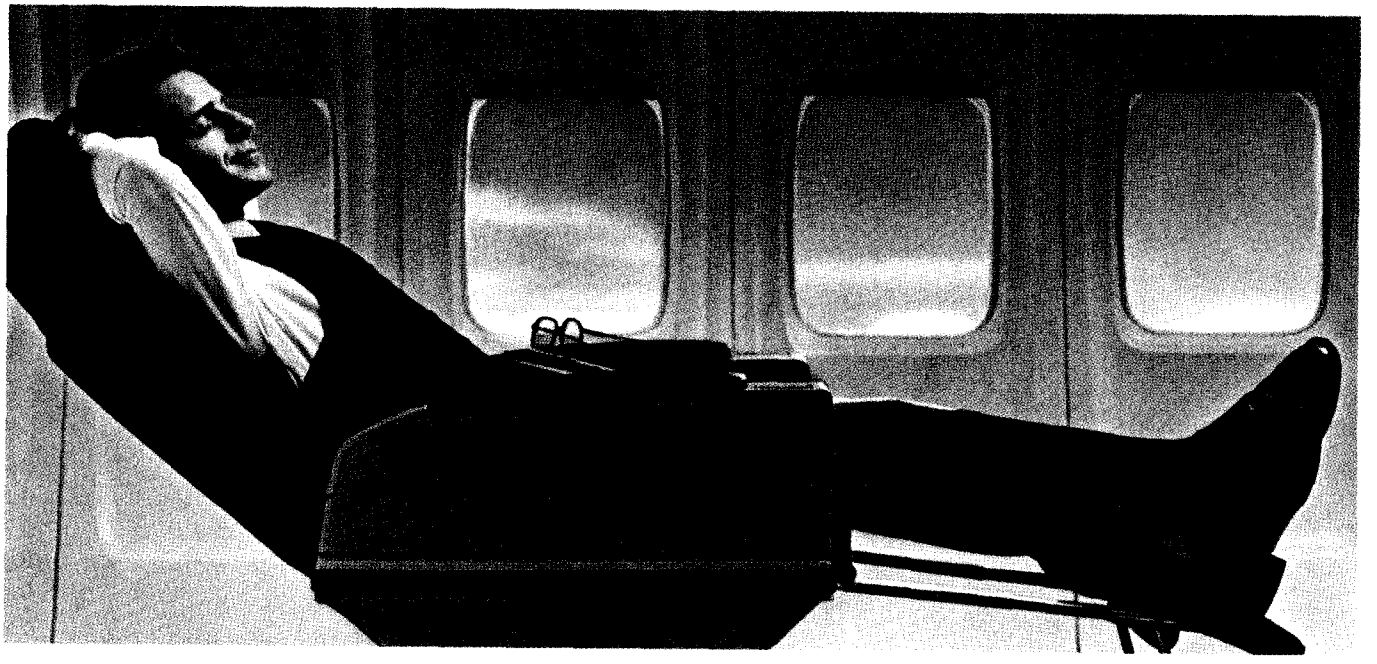

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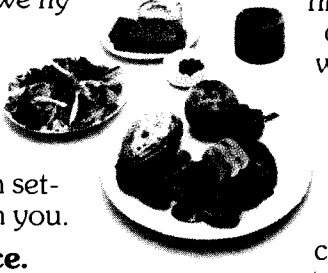

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